NEW STATESMAN
80th ANNIVERSARY YEAR 1913-1993
& SOCIETY
4 SEPTEMBER 1993 £1.65 Inc 10% libel tax

ECEIVED
CT 15 1993
Property of
Ambassador College Library
Big Sandy, TX 75755

ENVIRONMENT SPECIAL
The anti-green backlash

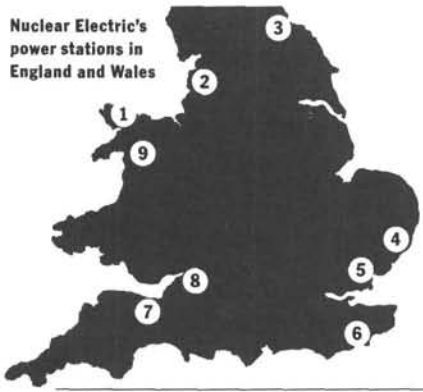
The thorns in Labour's side

PLUS: Yvonne Roberts on the 'death' of the family
Nyta Mann: Does tomorrow belong to the BNP?
Frank Field: The forgotten goal of full employment
Young Unionists; Sunday trading; Art and the CIA

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

We don't contribute to global warming, we don't contribute to ozone depletion and we don't cause acid rain.

Are we friends of the earth?



Currently, 40% of the gases that contribute to the greenhouse effect are caused by the burning of fossil fuels. What's more, if the same amount of power produced by us was produced by fossil fuels it would mean an extra fifty million tonnes of CO_2 every year. Breathtaking isn't it. The fact is the twelve nuclear power stations we ope in England and Wales are safe, environment responsible and reliable. Spend an afternoo a nuclear power station and we'll be able tell you so much more. It certainly won't af your body but it might just change your m

1. Wylfa **2.** Heysham 1&2 **3.** Hartlepool **4.** Sizewell A&B **5.** Bradwell **6.** Dungeness A&B **7.** Hinkley Point A&B **8.** Oldbury-on-Severn **9.** Trawsfynydd

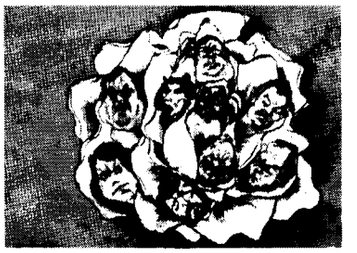
Nuclea Electri

To visit a nuclear power station, or for more information, write to this address: Peter Haslam, Nuclear Electric plc, 123 Pall Mall, London SW1Y

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CONTENTS

COVER STORY The thorns in Labour's side
24 Down on Brighton seafront, the battle of the mods and trads is about to begin. But how much is there to choose between them, asks Sarah Baxter



FEATURES 14 Orangemen are not the only root Northern Ireland's Young Unionists want to include Catholics in the party and cut its links with the Orange Order, reports Malachi O'Docherty **16 Divorced from reality** The family is sick, says Yvonne Roberts, but the blame lies with the right, not with feminism **20 Let's get to work** Labour could still achieve the goal of full employment, maintains Frank Field **26 Shadow reports** Who will survive the shadow cabinet elections? Paul Anderson awards end-of-term marks **30 The way we were** Tony Crosland was a moderniser, but he would have been dismayed by Labour's current plans, writes Anthony Arblaster **32 Does tomorrow belong to the BNP?** Nyta Mann on how democracy failed in Tower Hamlets **36 Paradox at play** Laurie Taylor considers the pleasing possibility that we might at any moment revert to a past identity **41 Traders of the lost act** Ben Webb looks at the debate on Sunday shopping

SCIENCE & ENVIRONMENT 45 Mocking the turtle The environmental movement's success in the US has brought the inevitable backlash. But not all critics are corrupt nor charges unfounded, says Thomas Harding **Green Gauge** Are green parties merely protest coalitions doomed to political failure, asks Vicky Hutchings

ARTS IN SOCIETY 49 American as plaster meat In Berlin, people protested against US imperialism. But in London, the only worry has been about who's made it onto the exhibition's A list, reports Rose Jennings **Film** Jonathan Romney can't quite keep that upper lip stiff at girls' movies **Music** Jonathan Sale's nephew has just topped the charts, but he's not laughing **TV** Jaci Stephen learns to diet at the Royal Television Society

BOOKS 53 To those born later Ned Chaillet examines the journals of Bertolt Brecht **Cracks in the high ground** John Dugdale on John Reith **Fiction** Amanda Hopkinson on short stories by Gabriel García Márquez, David V Barrett on cyberpunk **Radical chic** Janet Barron finds unexpected relish in Nancy Mitford's letters **PrintOut** on William Boyd

"Sleepless in Seattle", page 51

REGULARS 4 Defence Fund News 5 Editorial Boris Yeltsin's coup **7 Felix Bennett 9 Shoreditch, Fourth Estate 10 Diary** It may not have been fair, says Sean French, but it was cricket **11 Ian Aitken** on citizen's income schemes **12 News From Elsewhere; Letter from Jericho 15** John Edmonds' **Influences 34 Political column** Sarah Baxter on the lame duck prime minister **35 Sideliners, Edward Pearce 37 Letters, This Scotland 39 Fringe Benefits 61 Endgames, Chess 63 Backchat, Forteana**
Cover: Felix Bennett

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Join New Statesman Defence Fund
for the best music hall of 1993

New Statesman Knees Up

Friday 15th October
Doors open: 7.15pm
Three-course dinner: 7.30pm
Music hall show: 9-11pm
Tickets: £20

Aldgate East tube ... Plenty of parking ...

The Brick Lane Music Hall
125 Brick Lane, London

Great fun and loadsamoney

The Defence Fund cricket team, captained by Sean French, won the John Major Memorial Trophy by eight wickets against the Huntingdon Labour Party Members All-Star Eleven last weekend. Our match superstars included Angela Eagle MP, who bowled out Hugh Seckleman, Labour candidate for Huntingdon at the last general election, and top scorer Andrew Miller MP. The match, dinner and an auction of rare *objets d'art* raised more than £1000 towards the Defence Fund. Meanwhile, in London another £600 was collected at a preview screening of Ken Loach's new film *Raining Stones.*

The next Defence Fund event is our old-time music hall evening in London's Brick Lane; a night of eating, drinking and cabaret on Friday 15 October. Tickets for the evening are £20 each. For more details call Nicola on 071 739 3211.

I want to live in a country that has a free press so that I can read what I choose. I want the law changed to stop printers, distributors and retailers being sued for libel. I want the NSS to survive.

I enclose a donation of £ . . . . . .

I would like to order . . . . . tickets for the Music Hall and Dinner Evening at £20 each.

I would like to order . . . . . Black (XL) *Don't Think* T-shirts at £7.99, plus £1 p&p (thanks to *The Oldie* for this design), and/or I would like to order . . . . . Black (XL) *Libel Tour* T-shirts at £7.99, plus £1 p&p.

I enclose a cheque for £ . . . . . .

Name: . . . . . .

Address: . . . . . .

. . . . . .

made payable to New Statesman Defence Fund, or debit my Access/ Visa/Diners Club/Amex card number

Expiry date: . . . . . Signature: . . . . . .

Please return this form with your donation if applicable to: New Statesman & Society, Freepost, London E2 8BR (no stamp needed)

With thanks this week to:

Andrew & Jo Leadbetter, Ann Darnbrough, W Howard Long, Norris Harvey, D Henderson, Joan Richardson, FJ & CS Caviglioli, Susan Bowen, E Charles, Yvonne Cooper, Sheila Evans, Irene Brown-Lana, Julian Smith, Peter French, Eric & Pauline Sudale, Marjorie & Hugh Fraser, Dr D Lang, AWB Simpson, David Rennie, DM Parker, Rob & Jose Stanyon, Leonard Moss, PF Leeson, Jon Bewley, ER Wallace, Peter May, Peggy Pearman, Robert Crookall, David Stocks, B Rohan,S Morland, CE Fitchett, FT Womack, Elizabeth and Ronald Harrison, Martin Gazzard, CA Maher, PR & ER Hulley, Ritchie Robertson, TN Raddings, George Preedy, Joan Pyle, David Burgess, EG Morgan-Fletcher, Roy Galbraith, Mr & Mrs Segal, MA Russell, A & R Morrish, E South, JSM Band, Brenda Jackson, Dr PM Lee, Bryn Scourfield, Peter & Jean Lawley, Dr R Clark, Mai & David Knibbs, JRC & GM Iglesias, JS Ferguson, Dr Jane Cole, Noreen & Mansel Jones, LC Elliott, Esme & Morris Dodderidge, Ian Heath, Eric Bray, Paul & Annabel Caddle, Aidan Baker, Jack & Christine Porter, SA and HD Osborn, J E Mitton, RE Shoebridge, Michael Gough, Harold & Christine Hopkins, Philip Dixon Phillips, Judy Tomlinson, Margo Lynn, VK Moodaley, JM & R Kendrick, Chris & Stephanie Pearson, Dr WRP Bourne, Mike Howes, M Hall, Jim Sharp, John Orford, C Newby, VE Oak, Paul Richards, EJE Hobsbawn, Pete Williams, Mary Gordon, Prof Robert Dingwall, J Wakeford, WJ Morrison, BF Corlett, John M Elliott, Patricia & Cyril Pearce, JA Petchey, Valerie Broom, RM Langdon, Jessie Baker, IH Hendersen, Brynmor & Patricia Woodcock, Hu J Wood, Ian Morris, Rev. Geoffrey Bottoms, Mark & Muriel Leaf, J Morgan, PN & ME Turner, Lawrence Fitzpatrick, Rev. R Cuthbertson, FL Feltham, R Summerfield, Brian Leather, Stephen Wyatt, Eric Swaison, VL Jupp, J Jones, Dr DA Hopkinson, Barbara Morris, Janet Pascoe, RK Turner, M Goldman, Jenny Woodall, Prof. D M Craig, EM Passes, JM Elliott, Anne Holt & David Rubinstein, BJ Morris, Sandie Lock, Vincent W Acheson, D Fuller, DJ Griffiths, Tony & Maggie Winters, JFC Hawkridge, Peter & Gwyneth Jones, Harold Pollins, TL Pittom, Peter Willig, Dr R and Mrs S Doormashkin, Margaret Barrett, AK & HM Morgan, Richard Ross, AW Hunt, Mrs L Shaw, Ian C Gilchrist, Judith Barrett, Justin AG Long, H Erben, Donald & Barbara Lloyd, Elizabeth A Brown, Martin Bates, Peter and Valerie Tennant, Maureen & Alex McGibbon, A Murphy, Lenore Robinson, Les & Pam Linn, Dr WT & Mrs PM Fullerton, WH Ferry, A Flynn, R Lawrence, Dr R M Leaney, GM and D Sawyer, G Peck, A Brassington, Helen Stephen & Dave Baskerville, JD Marshall, Danny Daly, B Meredeen & BS Martin, Jill Parton, Adrian Marsden, Duncan H, R B Tarling,itzpatrick, Tine van Houts, Sandie Lock, Adrian Bhagat, Vincent W Acheson, D Fuller, David Griffiths, JFC Hawkridge, JW Coaton, Dorothy Gilroy, Kath & John Madden, Jane Taylor, Dr Peter Dallas Ross, Roger Pratt, S Knill, WG & JF Williams, Ian Aitken, Mark G Phillips, Polegate & Willingdon Labour Party, Georgina Smith

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Andrzej Krauze

Boris Bonaparte

Boris Yeltsin's coup was to be expected. He promised as much in August, when he blamed the Russian parliament for the failure to agree a new constitution and dissolve itself. He said then that he would impose new elections by presidential decree, and declared September would be a "heated month" in his battle against the parliament. So it has turned out.

The west has characterised his struggle as one between a "reformist" president and a "conservative"—or "communist"—dominated parliament. Bill Clinton and John Major both rushed to express their support.

But the application of such terms to describe the Russian parliament—and its opposition to Yeltsin—makes no sense. Of course, the overwhelming majority of its MPs—as well as members of Yeltsin's inner circle and Yeltsin himself—were members of the Communist Party, some of them—again, including Yeltsin—holding prominent posts in the party structure. But those who still adhere to anything remotely resembling a communist programme are a tiny fraction in the parliament. When these MPs assembled the necessary one million signatures in support of their own constitutional proposals (the prerequisite under the current constitution for an issue to be put to a referendum), they were simply ignored by their colleagues.

The term "conservative" is also misleading. What is portrayed in the west as a progressive programme of reform amounts to a mad rush to the market that has seriously destabilised Russian society, immiserated millions and wreaked havoc in terms of industrial production and social welfare alike. Price liberalisation in the context of a continuing state monopoly of most productive enterprises resulted in 2,000 per cent inflation in 1992, 370 per cent in the first seven months of 1993. The shelves may be full in the shops, but the purchasing power of the vast majority of the population has collapsed. Production is down by as much as 40-50 per cent.

All social indicators confirm the extent of the crisis. Mortality, morbidity, suicide and crime statistics show dramatic deteriorations. Russia now has a murder rate four times higher than the US; Moscow is twice as bad as New York. Former apparatchiks, gangsters and crooks grow wealthy while ordinary people's lives are falling apart around them.

This, and not any spurious conservative-reformist divide, is why Yeltsin has lost the backing of the parliament that voted him its chairman three years ago, that stood alongside him against the coup plotters in 1991, and that created the executive presidency he now holds when those plotters were defeated.

The future of NSS

The Statesman and Nation Publishing Company, the owner and publisher of *New Statesman & Society*, has agreed in principle to recommend acceptance of an offer from Derek Coombs to purchase a 49 per cent stake in the company. The offer was one of several proposals for refinancing the company put forward by board members, the editor and staff, and considered by the board last week. The final decision will be made at a meeting of shareholders on 21 October.

Derek Coombs is a businessman and was a Conservative MP from 1970 to 1974. He has not been a member of the Conservative Party for the past 10 years and is not a member of any political party. He has agreed to endorse all the existing safeguards of the magazine's independence and editorial integrity contained in its present constitution. If the board resolutions are passed, the present board will remain and Mr Coombs will be invited to join the board, together with Arthur Davidson, formerly a Labour minister.

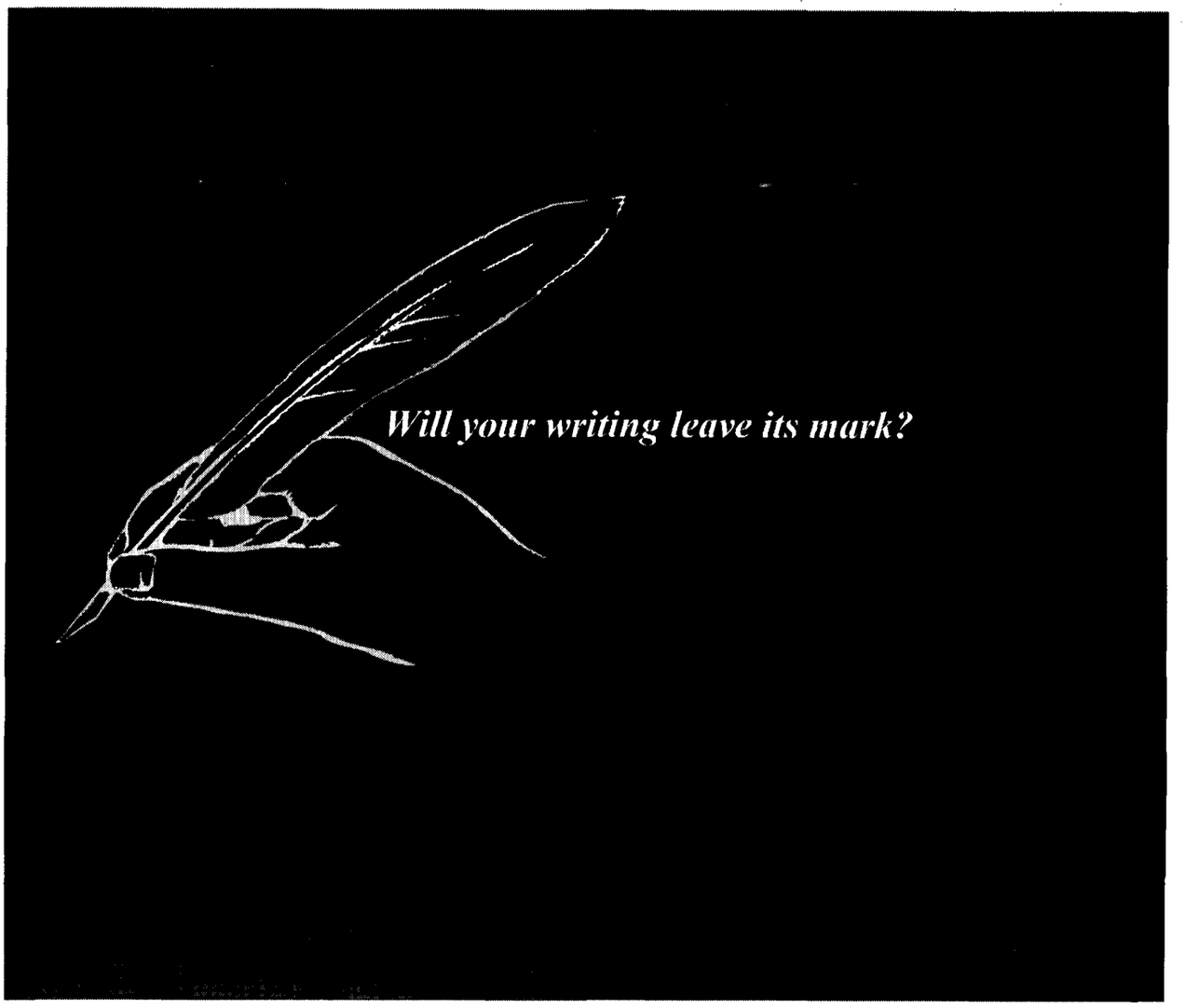
The April referendum may have given him a personal confidence vote of 58 per cent, with 53 per cent support for his economic reforms, but on a low turnout, it amounted more to a lack of belief in any alternative than to an outright expression of support .

The use of the referendum as a political weapon, however, and the way in which it emboldened Yeltsin to act against his opponents, is a reflection of the president's autocratic tendencies. These have always been a danger to Russia's nascent democracy. As with Lech Walesa in Poland, who has at least learned to live with his political opponents, his position is more that of a Bonaparte or latterday czar than a modern political leader. Yeltsin deliberately eschewed creating his own party two years ago, and in doing so held back the development of the sort of programme-based parties and other political institutions that are necessary for an effectively functioning democracy.

Russia's constitutional arrangements are imperfect, the Russian parliament's democratic mandate is inadequate, the drift in policy- and decision-making is dangerous. But autocracy—even the limited form of autocracy that allows for the election of some sort of new legislative assembly in December—is a return to the bad old ways of a country that has only a weak tradition of democracy, and urgently needs to create new democratic institutions if it is not to slide into a political and economic abyss.

What we are witnessing in Russia is a clash between rampant, free-market capitalism, forced through via the agency of a single powerful leader seeking to accrete all power to his office, and oppositional forces who seek to mitigate at least some of the consequences of that rush to the market. It is not a battle between the old order and the new. Rather it is a struggle for social welfare, employment, a secure standard of living and for democracy against those who believe that the market must rule all.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Maybe the Bayer Journalism Awards for Science in the Environment will help

Few will dispute the need for radical improvements in the way we treat our planet. How successful we are at converting concern into effective action is directly related to our understanding of the issues – in particular the role that technology plays. Does science contribute to environmental solutions or is it part of the problem? These questions are being raised with increasing frequency as the environment debate moves on from what the issues are to how we can find answers.

The 1993 Bayer Journalism Awards for Science in the Environment have been launched in association with The Environment Council to encourage contributions to this wide-ranging discussion. For the debate to be stimulating and progressive the issues need to be presented and explored in an accurate, objective and understandable way.

The journalists who write on these issues and who are taken seriously already know this. We hope the Bayer Awards will bring the recognition that their contributions deserve.

First prize is £1000 plus £250 for two runners-up in each of three categories: national, regional and trade press. Winners' names will be announced on 29 November 1993.

The Judging Panel:

DrMalcolm Aickin,
Chairman, The Environment Council;

Julian Pettifer,
Journalist and broadcaster;

Sir Hugh Rossi,
former Chair, House of Commons Environment Select Committee;

Dr Elizabeth Nelson,
Chair, UK Ecolabelling Board;

Alun Anderson,
Editor, New Scientist.

If you would like to know more about Bayer's environmental programme. write to:

Mr Andrew Craven,
Bayer plc,
Strawberry Hill,
Newbury,
RG13 1JA

Bayer

Expertise with Responsibility

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Last Thursday's other by-election

While the nation's gaze was drawn to by-election events on the Isle of Dogs, something else of significance was happening in the Dorset village of Lytchett Matravers. With the Liberal Democrats requiring just one more seat to add Dorset to their already impressive list of captured county councils in the south west, the stakes were high at the election rerun held last Thursday.

In May, the magnificently-named Conservative, Chipps Selby-Bennett, was declared to have seen off his Liberal Democrat challenger, Peter Gainsford by just one vote. When the Liberal Democrats discovered that one of Gainsford's votes had been disallowed for not having the polling station stamp,they appealed to the High Court on the grounds that the vote should have been allowed, the result declared a tie and the winner decided by drawing straws. The appeal was upheld and a rerun ordered.

In the aftermath of Christchurch, the Tories half-expected to lose; but as in Christchurch, the extent of the defeat came as a shock. Gains ford romped home with 3,047 votes to Selby-Bennett's 1,879. Furthermore, the turnout was 63 per cent, remarkable for a local by-election, so the Tories could not even put it down to apathy.

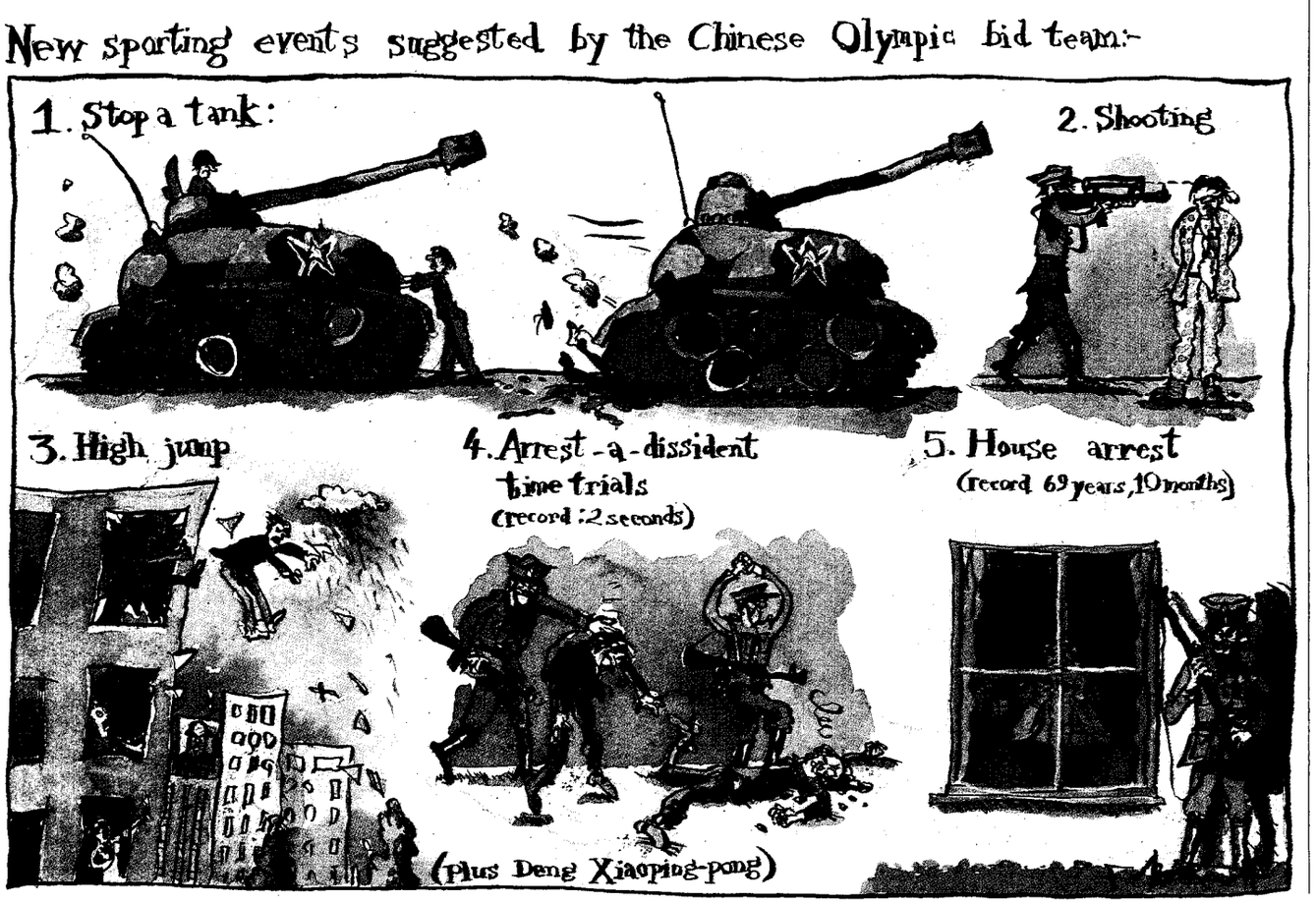
The Liberal Democrats, as the new majority party on the council, will now be entitled to an extra seat on each committee, making it that much easier for them to implement their manifesto.

Their first action on coming to office was to reverse the previous council's decision to site a landfill rubbish tip near Holwell, which had outraged half the county, in favour of the construction of new incinerators, at an estimated cost of £1.5 million. The Conservatives immediately asked where the money was coming from and were surprised by the answer. Robin Legg, the new deputy leader, announced that the council was in contact with its counterparts in Blackpool and Brighton with a view to a joint appeal to the Home Office to pay a greater share towards the cost of policing the Conservative Party conference. Next year is Bournemouth's turn, with security costs currently estimated at anything up to £2.6 million, of which the Home Office normally pays around half. This means that if the Home Office picks up the whole tab, or the conference is held elsewhere, then the saving to the council is roughly equivalent to the cost of the incinerators. When asked to comment upon this strategy, the Conservative chairman of the police committee, Sir Stephen Hammick, rather let the side down by saying, "I wish you well. One might well ask why can't they have the wretched thing in London anyway?"

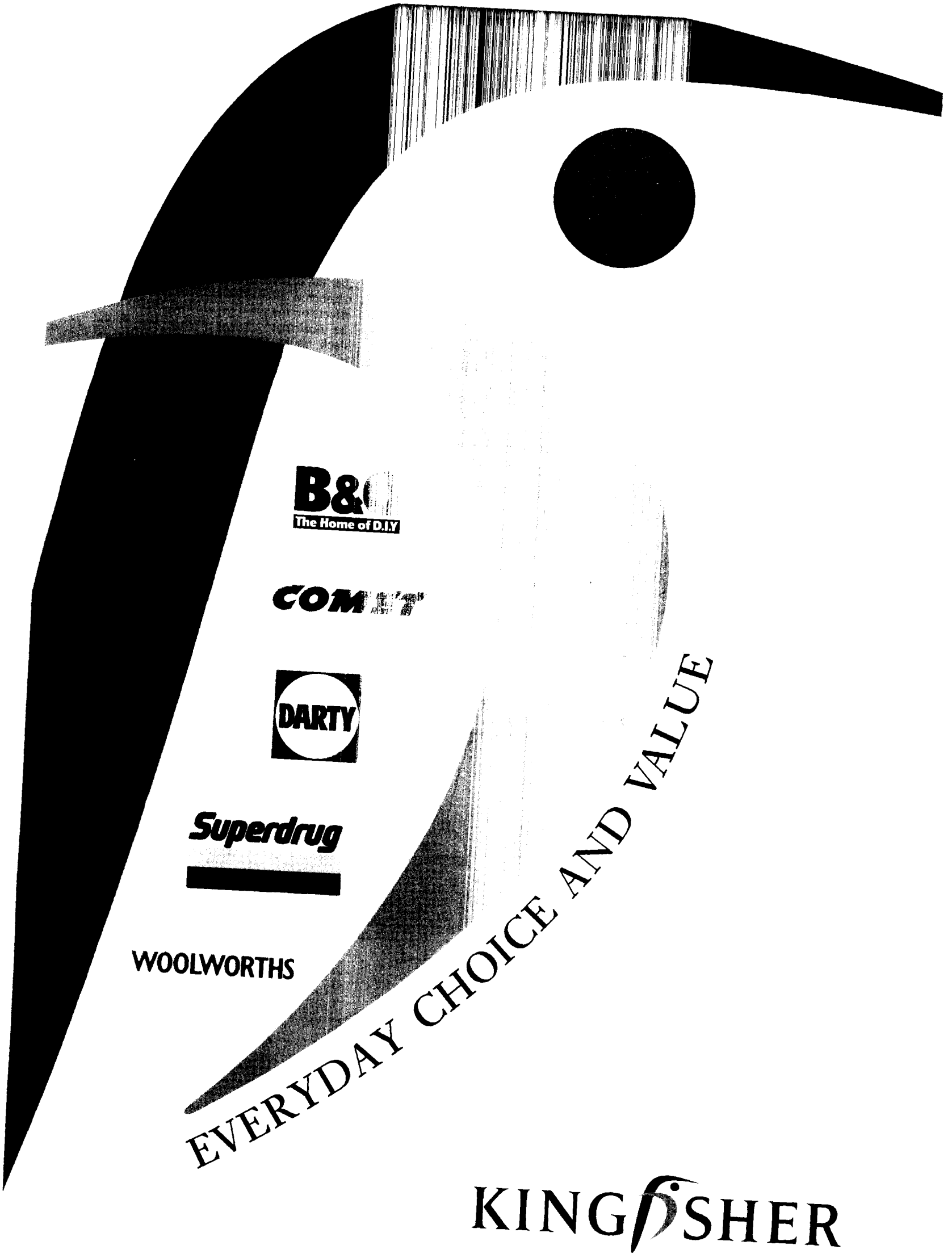
If Hammick's remark betrays a measure of dissatisfaction on the part of Dorset Tories with their government, it is as nothing compared with that felt by the voters. On the day after Dorset went Liberal Democrat, the company of HMS Osprey received the freedom of the borough in Weymouth. "Lucky they got it while they're still here," commented one of those present; a reminder, if any were needed, that the Navy's days in nearby Portland are numbered, after close on two centuries. The effects on the town's trade and employment are incalculable. If tourism is to take up the slack, as will doubtless be suggested, the pending cut in the number of train services into Weymouth hardly seems conducive. Little wonder that people who have never voted anything but Conservative in their lives are beginning to lose the habit.

Trouble getting NSS?

NSS should be on sale in most medium and large newsagents, and in many smaller shops. In particular, W H Smith and Menzies should stock us. If there is a shop near you that you think ought to sell the magazine, but does not, please ring Pat Coyne on 071-739 3211, or write to NSS Freepost, London E2

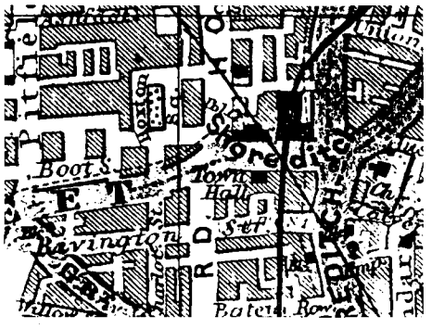

New sporting events suggested by the Chinese Olympic bid team:-
1. Stop a tank:
2. Shooting
3. High jump
4. Arrest-a-dissident time trials
(record :2 seconds)
5. House arrest
(record 69 years, 10 months)
(Plus Deng Xiaoping-pong)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

SHOREDITCH



It might not be an omen for the elections to Labour's NEC, but Tony Benn has lost his place as King of the Labour Conference Fringe—a position he has held for as long as anyone has bothered to count the number of appearances made by Labour's stars billed in the conference fringe guide. By Shoreditch's reckoning, Benn is appearing at a mere nine meetings this conference—the same number as Robin Cook, Ken Livingstone, Tony Blair and Mo Mowlam, but one fewer than both Clare Short and Gordon Brown. That said, King of the Unofficial Fringe, which includes meetings not listed in the fringe guide, looks like being the energetic Michael Meacher, who tells us that, despite his low official tally of six engagements in Brighton this year, he will actually be starring in 13 of them.

The biggest threat to Benn's NEC position is set to come from Harriet Harman, who is rumoured to be storming up the poll. She is likely to get enough votes to be elected in her own right, and not just as the "the highest-place woman" on the list. It could be the most effective answer to the gripes by the men about the performance of women in the shadow cabinet. Harman will be speaking out against Labour sexism at a conference fringe meeting this weekend and intends to challenge the unions to set up a new initiative, Women Employed, which will offer sisterhood, legal support and an advice line to women in large and small enterprises. She reckons it's time the brothers stopped moaning about how women don't want to join them and did something for a change.

The shadow cabinet elections are not until November, but the jockeying for position is already under way. For once, the Campaign Group stalwart, Mildred Gordon, will not be standing. In the past, she has been the recipient of bags of votes from reactionary men, who didn't want to vote for women with a chance of winning. Now that the rules have changed and everyone has to vote for a minimum of four women, the risk of actually getting elected is too great.

Strangely, given the recession and the dire financial state of the existing left-wing press, there will be two launch events for new lefty magazines at the conference fringe this year; *New Economy*, a quarterly economic policy journal published by the Institute for Public Policy Research, and *New Century*, another quarterly, edited by John Underwood—the television journalist who briefly succeeded Peter Mandelson as Labour's communications director. More strangely still, however, *New Century* has its origins in discussions aimed at providing the perenially cash-strapped *Tribune* newspaper with a quarterly colour supplement.

Alas, one outfit that won't be by the seaside this year is the Campaign for Labour Representation in Northern Ireland. For the simple reason that it has dissolved itself following an almighty bust-up with Kate Hoey MP and what the campaign's goodbye newsletter calls "her unionist coterie"—otherwise known as the Democracy Now pressure group. The Campaign says that Hoey and friends, who set up Democracy Now last year, have hijacked the campaign for Labour to organise in Northern Ireland from the Campaign for Labour Representation, which it has organised since 1977. Not only that, says the Campaign, but Hoey and Co have made it an explicity Ulster Unionist effort, instead of one that accepts Labour's policy of a united Ireland by consent. The newsletter is especially sore about Democracy Now's friendliness with Mirror Group News chief executive David Montgomery, since MGN is sponsoring Democracy Now's fringe meeting next week.

Shoreditch can exclusively reveal the *real* reason for John Smith's decision to delay until next Wednesday the vote on how Labour selects its parliamentary candidates. It is that he is part of a worldwide conspiracy (which includes, among others, both Boris Yeltsin and Alexander Rutskoi) to make key events happen between the time *NSS* goes to press and the time it hits the streets. But Smith has obviously forgotten something: next week, as at previous Labour conferences, a daily *NSS* will be produced for conference delegates.

Oh dear. It looks like Paddy Ashdown's belated investigation into the Tower Hamlets Lib Dems activities may have to widen its remit a little, following the news that Hackney council Lib Dem leader Colin Beadle was nominated and proposed for his election to the local authority in 1990 by one Gary Russell. The embarrassing thing is that this is the same Gary Russell selected by the National Front leadership to organise on its behalf in the Hackney area at the same time. Even worse, it seems Russell was fairly open in his NF promotions, running the Hackney NF branch and distributing copies of NF News. So why did he propose and sign the nomination papers for a Lib Dem candidate? A secondhand form of entryism? Perhaps Labour's local government spokesperson, Jack Straw, wasn't too far off the mark when he said that parts of east London had become "Paddy Ashdown's equivalent of Militant Liverpool in the early eighties".

FOURTH ESTATE

A regular monitor of the tabloid press

16 September: Those Tories are fighting like ferrets in a sack. "Lamont sticks the dagger in," says the *Mail*, diagnosing the former chancellor's attack on Major as "revenge for what he considers to be unfair dismissal". Ken Clarke, by contrast, gets an approving editorial nod. "He is here, there and everywhere, making news and making waves." But, warns the *Mail*, while the party tears itself to pieces, inflation is creeping up. "Unless they can prevent the fragile economic recovery from stalling, it won't much matter who leads the Tories into the next election."

18 September: "Sieg Heil . . . and now he's a British councillor." That's how the *Mirror* presents the "nasty little victory" by the BNP's Derek Beackon, "a man who shames us all". Others take the Tower Hamlets result just as seriously, but come to different conclusions. For the *Express*, it proves that "immigration may be a taboo subject at the dining tables of the chattering elite, but, as the vote in Millwall has painfully demonstrated, it is a very live issue for a lot of ordinary people". In the *Sun*, boxer Gary Mason (he has an Isle of Dogs penthouse) advises fellow blacks and Asians to leave the area of their own accord, rather than waiting to be thrown out. "It's not worth the fighting, the hassle and the blood."

19 September: The papers scent blood. Even the *Mail on Sunday* is worried about the PM's "waning authority", predicting that Blackpool will see "the making or breaking of John Major". The *Sunday Express* knows which horse to back. Under the headline, "At last a man with a vision," it waxes lyrical about the right's rising darling, one M Portillo.

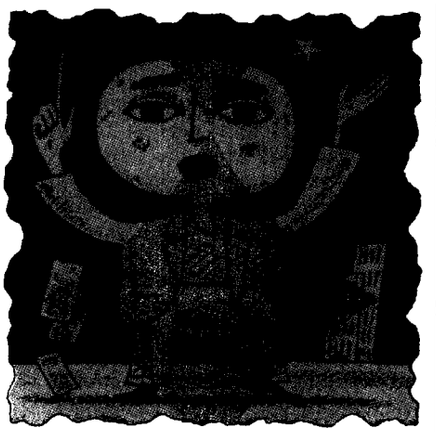
But Major retains some doughty allies. "Black Dog", also in the *Mail on Sunday*, tells of an irate woman who rang the *Sun* demanding to speak to the editor. Norma Major (for it was she) wasted no time in telling Kelvin MacKenzie he was "an absolute monster" for having published photos of the Majors' holiday hideaway in Portugal. "Are we allowed no privacy at all?" stormed Norma, slamming down the phone. The mouselike Huntingdon dame can evidently roar when roused.

20 September: The vultures continue to circle. The *Express* claims the PM is "near to political despair", telling "close advisers" that he feels unable to confide in party chairman Norman Fowler or Chancellor Ken Clarke, whom he suspects of wanting his job.

21 September: "Tory rebels start to swing over to Clarke," reports the *Mirror*, with glee. The *Star*'s Brian Hitchen comes to the rescue. "Hands off Honest John!" he demands, denouncing the "bunch of talentless, double-dealing, self-opinionated pipsqueaks", who are trying to bring "a decent man down".

22 September: The *Sun* rises on a Moscow with "One country, two leaders". At least they've *got* leaders. And say what you like about Rutskoi, he's definitely no pipsqueak.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



It may not have been fair, says **Sean French**, but it *was* cricket

Last Saturday felt like one of those wonderful days we ought to have had back in the summer when we really needed it. The season of mists and mellow fruitfulness may have been well under way, but out at St Peter's recreation ground, the sounds were not of Keats' wailful choirs of gnats and full-grown lambs loud bleating from hilly bourn (I've long thought that Hilary Bourne would be a good name for a character in a novel), but the gentle sound of willow against leather, the occasional rattle of tumbling bails, a murmur of applause from the pavilion. What could be more civilised than a cricket match between *New Statesman & Society* and the Huntingdon Labour Party, contested in the heart of John Major's constituency?

The answer is, almost anything. Cricket has rarely had much to do with civilisation, starting with its most famous figure, W G Grace, who once responded to a verdict of LBW against him with the assertion that, "The crowd have come to see me bat, not you umpire", and refused to leave the crease. The famous bowler Harold Larwood only received his MBE in the most recent honours list, more than 50 years since his role in the notorious Bodyline Series between England and Australia, in which a deliberate strategy of intimidating the batsman was first adopted. Anybody who has played cricket knows that it is routine to tamper with the ball, deceive the umpire with orchestrated calls for LBW, and attempt a host of other dubious tactics.

A gentleman's game? On one famous occasion the final ball before tea struck the batsman's pads and there was no shout for LBW (the umpire can only give a batsman out for LBW in response to an appeal). As the teams walked in, the umpire mentioned to the bowler that he ought to have appealed since the ball would clearly have hit the stumps. When the players returned to the field and the umpire called for play, the bowler shouted, "Howzat?", and, since the next ball had not yet been bowled, a chagrined umpire was compelled by the rules to give a very dismayed batsman out.

So, if the local newspaper complained that the whole idea of our little cricket match was "disgusting", well, that's cricket, as Frank Bruno says repeatedly, and gnomically.

The impeccably correct *New Statesman* team had been selected without any discrimination on the basis of race, sex, age or ability. There were players who had scored centuries earlier in the season, who owned their own bats, who wore sweaters with impressive-looking colours around the V-necks; and there were players whose throws reached only half way from the boundary to the square, who wondered aloud whether we oughtn't to have obtained a ball that didn't have all that stitching round the middle. And I was the captain.

Among the team members were three Labour MPs, Graham Allen, Angela Eagle and Andrew Miller, all of whom were in their way formidable players. We were most grateful to them for joining and in return, as it turned out, they were able to discover what it is like to be in a winning team. The biographer of Harold Wilson, Ben Pimlott, did not consider himself fit to play, but instead sent along his two young sons, Dan and Nat, and Andrew Miller was accompanied by his daughter, Joanne, which meant that we had at least three players who could bend down to retrieve the ball with a reasonable expectation of getting up again.

I performed the captain's first duty of winning the toss and showed my confidence by putting Huntingdon in to bat. Our opponents had an opening batsman with a disconcerting ability to find the boundary on regular occasions, but was then tempted by a beautifully flighted delivery from Angela Eagle and skied the ball to Andrew Miller in a salutary example of north-western team work. In her next two balls, Eagle missed the wicket by the narrowest of margins and then hit the stumps with a deceptively straight ball. As her batting was later to show, she was the most technically correct player on the pitch, yet she told me afterwards she had been forbidden from ever playing when she was at school.

Our principal problem while fielding was the appearance at the crease of a woman who had clearly never played before. Our umpire, Ian Aitken, might not have approved if we had started bowling bouncers at her, but we found an ideal solution. With apparent chivalry, the diminutive Nat was put on to bowl, but as we knew he was one of the only members of the team who actually plays regularly, the unfortunate batswoman's middle stump was immediately removed by a straight ball.

Huntingdon scored just 82 runs in their 20 overs. No caterer had been hired to provide food for the interval, perhaps for some symbolic reason, and we began our own innings with little delay, the first ball being faced by our editor, Steve Platt. There is little to be said about our own batting, except that words like "brutal" and "efficient" come to mind. Eagle provided some solid early defence, taking the shine off the new ball. Then an unbeaten partnership of over 60 runs between Platt and Andrew Miller swiftly saw us home.

This impressive display was only marred by a lapse as the score passed 50, when Miller and Platt asked me whether they oughtn't to retire and give other batsmen in the team a chance. This, it seems to me, demonstrates some of what is wrong with the left in Britain today, a misplaced guilt about success, a fear of individual achievement. Perhaps at the upcoming Labour conference, we shall have motions demanding more equitable cricket laws, with redistribution of runs to differently abled players, compulsory equality of outcome between teams, counselling available for any batsmen traumatised by failure at the crease and the abolition of the term, "maiden", as a reflection of a sexist double standard.

I ordered the two batsmen to return to the wicket, to go for the jugular and to grind the Huntingdonians' faces into the dirt. There is a host of relevant American sporting sayings: "Winners never quit and quitters never win" is one; "Show me a good loser and I'll show you a loser" is another.

Angela Eagle told me that she sensed that the men in the opposing team were unnerved by being bowled at by a woman and, indeed, her victims seemed to have difficulty accomodating it into the "cheers, mate" sort of discourse that seems to be compulsory on these sort of occasions.

There is at the moment an absurd proliferation of books exploring feminism from the point of view of sex as if this were the only significant issue involved. The hidden, but more important, reason for this is that most of us, sexists or not, like reading about other people's sex lives. Confessions about the squalid, promiscuous things that people got up to in the sixties are of especial interest.

However, I suspect that the way we talk to each other about humdrum issues, and the drab matters of who does the washing up, takes responsibility for the children and runs the household are of more practical relevance. I was reminded of this last week when an electrician arrived to try to find out why all our electrical appliances had stopped working at the same time.

My partner and I are equally ignorant about anything to do with circuits and fuses, but the electrician insisted on talking to me man-to-man, showing me diagrams, considering options, passing me a screwdriver to help him remove a socket, when I have trouble remembering which way the screw goes round when you want it to come out of the hole.

To my partner, he merely said that "funny things" were going on with our electrics. When pressed for further detail, he insisted that funny things were happening and returned to his discussion with me, of which I comprehended not a single word. The fiction that we men understand these things had to be maintained.

But if you were a publisher faced with Sean French on the language of domestic life, or yet another oral history of oral sex since the sixties, which would *you* choose?

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

IAN AITKEN

The needle's eye opens wide

One would have thought that simple prudence would have persuaded most keen young Thatcherite ministers to resist the temptation to justify their views by reference to the values of the Sermon on the Mount. The lady herself, after all, attempted that toe-curling trick on more than one occasion, and succeeded only in attracting a great deal of public ridicule.

But young Michael Portillo—who, as chief secretary to the Treasury, is the man responsible for saying No to the spending ambitions of his cabinet colleagues—seems to be fashioned from the same impervious material as Thatcher. Undeterred by fear of ridicule, he delivered a lecture to a Christian forum last week that sought to establish that cutting government spending wasn't just a matter of reducing Nigel Lawson's borrowing requirement, but was actually his duty to God.

Indeed, he daringly borrowed one of Lady Thatcher's least appealing arguments, asserting that the Good Samaritan wouldn't have been much use to the man set upon by thieves if he hadn't been rich. Mr Portillo clearly thought that this perception supported his belief that trying to become a billionaire wasn't just consistent with Christian teaching, but was an activity that godly people were almost obliged to pursue.

As he put it: "The relief of poverty, the increase of food production, the advance of medicine, the spread of learning, all require money. Where wealth is being created, there is employment. Where wealth is being destroyed, there is bitterness and conflict."

There is, of course, a logical weakness here that even a first-year philosophy student could identify. For wealth creation is an abstract concept, and does not presuppose the existence of wealthy individuals.

Certainly it is true that the creation of wealth makes it easier to do all the things Mr Portillo mentions. But it is perfectly possible to envisage a wealthy society without billionaires. Indeed, Britain bore some resemblance to just such a society until Mr Portillo's party won the 1979 election and set about destroying not only the welfare state, but our main source of wealth creation, manufacturing industry.

However, Mr Portillo goes further than this simple generalisation about wealth creation. His thesis is twofold—first, that high government spending means high taxation, which in turn means lower economic activity because of lower incentives; and second, that pouring out billions in welfare benefits inevitably undermines the personal responsibility of the recipients, locks them into a culture of dependency and deprives them of the opportunity to make moral choices.

I am not entirely clear what Mr Portillo means by these moral choices that people ought not to be deprived of—though I doubt if he is thinking of, let us say, the choice that some pensioners have to make between eating and keeping warm. It is more likely that what he has in mind is the choice between buying an ice-cream or contributing to the local hospital's flag day. But whatever it is, there can be no doubt that Mr Portillo sees personal, and not collective, responsibility, as the essential core of Christian teaching.

"The call to do good, which lies at the heart of Christianity, demands an individual response," he says. "You can't do good by proxy. There is no virtue in paying big taxes if you have no part in the decisions about how they are used."

But Mr Portillo has an additional Christian message, which is that handing out so much in welfare benefits undermines the will to work, especially among the young. This, he says, is why the government stopped paying benefits to 16- and 17-year-olds. Never mind that, more than anything, this condemned so many teenagers to live in cardboard boxes. It gave them the opportunity to make a soul-enhancing choice between starvation and prostitution.

Mr Portillo asserted that the Good Samaritan wouldn't have been much use if he hadn't been rich

Am I unfair? Perhaps. But what puzzles me about Mr Portillo's extraordinary lecture is that he seems entirely unaware of the hard work done on exactly this subject in the 1980s by some of his former colleagues in the Downing Street policy unit. The scheme that they produced more than met his complaints about the disincentive effect of welfare benefits and taxation. Yet it did so on the basis of a universal, rather than the kind of targeted, tightly means-tested, benefit that he and his cabinet colleagues now seem to be planning.

The idea has been around for some time under the title of Basic Income, or Citizen's Income—a concept owing something to the once-fashionable Social Credit movement. In its purest form, it would entail paying a guaranteed weekly income to every legal resident of the UK, as of right, and financing it by taxing all income over and above that figure, without tax allowances of any kind.

But what is remarkable about the scheme produced by the Downing Street researchers is that it is just as easy to reconcile it with right-wing Conservative principles as with those of welfare state-ists. How this came about is described by Christopher Monckton, the principal creator of the Downing Street scheme, in an arresting article in the current *Citizen's Income Bulletin*, published by the Citizens Income Research Group at £3.

Mr Monckton argues that the existing tax and welfare system is preposterously expensive, employing 80,000 civil servants on collecting taxes and another 60,000 on paying out benefits. Yet, far from combating poverty, it locks many recipients into permanent misery and unemployment because they lose more by working than by staying on benefit. This is the notorious poverty trap, and it has created a permanent, economically disenfranchised underclass.

What Mr Monckton calls the Universal Benefit would gradually replace the existing maze of welfare benefits, giving everyone a guaranteed minimum income that would be clawed back from those in work by way of income tax. But the disincentive to work would disappear because even the lowest paid would keep what they earned. It is the existing system that is the real shirker's charter, says Monckton, not Universal Benefit.

And the cost? Mr Monckton estimates that his version would require an additional 5p in the pound on income tax to reclaim exactly the Universal Benefit from average earners and ensure that the Exchequer suffers no loss compared with the present system. But he predicts massive savings in administration costs on the basis of just one means test for the tax system, instead of the myriad of means tests required by the existing muddle. Moreover, unemployment would almost certainly fall.

But the feature of the scheme that ought to catch Mr Portillo's eye, as well as appealing to the no less Christian John Smith, is the ease with which it can be adjusted to fit any ideology. A Smith government could raise tax and benefit rates, and also impose higher tax bands on the rich. A Portillo government could reduce them. But the new incentive to work would remain in either case.

So why didn't Mr Monckton's scheme find favour with Lady Thatcher? Alas, he does not tell us. Instead, he relates how a colleague attempted to explain the idea to Nigel Lawson, and eventually suggested that the Chancellor should consult Monckton next door in Number 10. "Not Monckton again!" groaned Lawson. "The man's mad, you know."

Now you couldn't have a better recommendation than that, could you?

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Shevardnadze makes a move

The alliance of a former Moscow foreign minister and a sadistic bank robber who languished in Soviet prisons for 27 years, was hardly the dream ticket Georgians might have hoped for to govern their infant republic. But for 18 months until last week, Eduard Shevardnadze and Jaba Ioseliani, the leader of the country's most powerful paramilitary group, jockeyed for position, alternating displays of unity and public squabbles scrutinised by wary citizens.

Now, however, at long last, the unholy alliance is over following Shevardnadze's dramatic announcement last Wednesday that he had been persuaded "by the will of the people" to reverse his decision to resign, made 24 hours earlier.

He had resigned because parliament had refused to grant him a radical package of emergency laws, including a nationwide curfew, prohibition, tight controls on the media and a clampdown on illegal armed forces. Ioseliani was both the main target and the main opponent.

Of course, Shevardnadze did not put it quite like that. The reason he gave for calling for emergency rule, which stops just short of martial law, is the insurrection in western Georgia by supporters of Zviad Gamsakhurdia, ousted from the presidency in December 1992. But although the "Zviadists" are in control of four towns and are furthering chaos in the country by blocking railways and roads linking the capital Tbilisi with the country's main harbour Poti, they pose no real threat to the government. The real target of the emergency law, as became apparent in the 24 hours that Georgia was without a leader, was the myriad paramilitary troops that terrorise the country—in particular the largest and most powerful, Ioseliani's 5,000-strong Mkhedrioni (the horsemen).

The Mkhedrioni style themselves as war heroes after their exploits in Georgia's three civil and ethnic wars of the past two years. Until last week, in the absence of a disciplined national army, Shevardnadze begrudgingly let them do most of the fighting in the nation's many hot-spots. But, sadly for Georgia, one thing the Mkhedrioni prefer to combat is looting and amassing personal fortunes, as the trail of destruction they have left behind them in their wake testifies.

It was Ioseliani and his men, together with the maverick sculptor turned military leader Tengiz Kitovani, who propelled Gamsakhurdia from office in the bloody coup of January 1992. The same pair invited Shevardnadze back to his native Georgia two months later. Until May this year, when Shevardnadze persuaded the two to step down from office, the three formed an odd triumvirate.

Being stripped of their official titles did not overly concern the two warlords, as the fledgling National Guard and police are no match for their muscle. Indeed, most are on their payroll—so far.

The quasi-legal status given to the Mkhedrioni (Shevardnadze was forced to concede to demands that they be called an "emergency service unit" rather than disband as he had requested) is now under threat. As revealed in his resignation and come-back speeches, Shevardnadze has set his sights on ridding himself and the country of the paramilitary gangs.

Sensing that emergency law was to be targeted not just at the Zviadist guerrillas, but at all armed bands, Ioseliani delivered a stinging condemnation of Shevardnadze. Surely, he asked, with parliament to be disbanded, and Shevardnadze to be head of state, interior minister *and* governor of the emergency rule, the country was heading for a dictatorship run by the methods used by the communists in the none-too-distant past.

Shevardnadze responded by saying he was not prepared to live in a country with a reputation for harbouring murderers and thieves. How was it possible, he wondered, that the murder rate in Georgia for the first half of 1993 was almost twice as high as that in the United States? Criminals masquerading as heroes were destroying the country, he said. People had to choose: either they wanted anarchy or the rule of law. Exit Shevardnadze—and the crowd of 10,000 outside parliament on Tuesday screaming his name and heckling silk-shirted, Rolex-clad Mkhedrioni speakers, seemed to indicate that Shevardnadze had got his message home.

But before battle could be joined there was the small matter of Abkhazia. Dormant for seven weeks since a Russian-brokered ceasefire ended the year-long war in the breakaway region, Abkhazian radicals took advantage of the turmoil in Tbilisi and launched an offensive to capture the province.

Shevardnadze now has four separate armies (the Ossetian, the Zviadist, the Abkhazian and the Mkhedrioni) lined up against him. He might now be wishing that his resignation was for real.

Liam McDowall

Africa abandoned

This week, Lucy Muyoyeta from Oxfam's Zambia office delivered 15,000 letters from Africa to a gathering of finance ministers attending this year's IMF/World Bank jamboree in Washington. The letters are from ordinary people in sub-Saharan Africa describing how IMF policies are making their lives a misery: "I urge you before my starving family dies to scrap all what our nation owes you . . . " reads one typical missive.

A cute PR ploy organised by Oxfam maybe, but with eastern Europe and Russia elbowing their way to the front of the aid queue, those at the back have to make themselves heard somehow.

The 48th annual meeting of the IMF/World Bank is being held against a background of threats of savage cuts in overseas aid budgets on the one hand and a growing number of calls for assistance on the other. The redevelopment of the West Bank and Gaza, although not on the official agenda, is expected to eclipse further the claims of African nations.

As usual, ministers from developing countries will attend in the hope that this time industrial nations will reach agreement over debt relief, and, as usual, they will probably go home disappointed.

It is now five years since the international community acknowledged the need to reduce Africa's crushing debt burden. But successive debt reform measures have so far failed to achieve this objective. As the industrial world fiddled over Toronto and Trinidad terms, the total debt burden for sub-Saharan Africa reached over US$183 billion in 1992, more than three times the level in 1980. Servicing this debt drains the region of US$10 billion annually—around one quarter of export earnings. Arrears are US$11 billion and growing.

Africa's debts are simply not payable at this level and the human cost of the structural adjustment programmes is a growing tragedy. In the past few years, as countries have struggled to service their debts by cutting down on domestic expenditure, literacy rates have fallen and child mortality rates have risen, reversing gains made in these areas in the seventies and early eighties.

At last year's IMF and World Bank meeting, developing countries were presented with the spectacle of first-world squabbles over who was to blame for the currency market turmoils, and hopes for agreement on a series of debt reduction and aid measures were dashed. This time, the problem of Russia and what to do about the Middle East dominates the agenda. Although the IMF has had to scale down its forecasts for growth in sub-Saharan Africa for this year from 3.3 per cent to 1 per cent, there is a sense of complacency in its continuing faith in monetarism, which squeezed the lifeblood out of even robust western economies in the eighties.

A debt write-off programme for African nations would not make any difference in the global economy: the sums are too small, and nowhere near the scale of debts for Latin American countries. However, in African terms, the sums are enormous. The World Bank has privately acknowledged this, and behind the scenes there is a growing rift between the World Bank and the IMF over the issue of debt relief. Now the Bush administration has been sent packing, there may well be a new impetus to those on the side of relief.

There is a compelling humanitarian case for debt relief, but also a political one. The implications for peace, security and global prosperity of allowing an entire region to drift into deepening poverty must surely be obvious.

Sarah Lonsdale

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LETTER FROM JERICHO

John L Stoddard, the 19th-century traveller, whose tomes on the Middle East are a priceless record of the times, records that Antony gave Jericho to Cleopatra, as her special property, as one might offer one's love a costly gem.

The jewel that once sparkled is long gone. Jericho is hot, dusty and plagued by flies which feed on the detritus of uncollected rubbish that litters its back streets.

Its magnificent palm trees are the only reminder of past glories. There are a cluster of them in the main square, where on most summer days the Star of David flag on the Israeli police post hangs limply as the barometer climbs towards 100 degrees Fahrenheit. Opposite, the marble walls of the Jericho municipality building are now defiantly adorned with caricatures of Yasser Arafat—harbingers of new footsteps in history.

Khaled owns one of the fruit and vegetable stalls that clutter the square and its approaches. Rows of oranges, bulging black aubergines, orange bunches of dates and water melons the size of beach balls are all laid out behind him.

What does he think of the Gaza/Jericho First peace deal? He nods in the direction of an Israeli police force jeep roaring past: "Well, you see, they are still here." But maybe in seven months they will be gone. "Maybe is a very good word, mister. Some peaches?"

Ahmed, drawing on his hooka pipe in the shade of a cafe on the Allenby Road, which leads to the famous bridge and Jordan, is more optimistic: "There is an Arab proverb that new shoes pinch your feet until you are used to them. So let's try the shoes; it's better than forever barefoot. Yes?" His words are a measure for most in Jericho.

Unlike Gaza, the town is dominated by Fatah—Arafat supporters have five of the seven seats on the local chamber of commerce and all 13 on the local agricultural association, by way of example.

"Have you seen Mr Arafat's new house?" asks one of Ahmed's poker-playing companions, "they say it is the green-and-white bungalow down the road." If the estate agents are to be counted in the peace debate, they have already given their affirmative. Better days are coming—a plot of land bought in Jericho for US$30,000 last year could now fetch US$100,000 more.

Abdel Kareem Sidr's money is on the change being real as well—US$200 dollars of it, to be precise, the bail he has borrowed from friends and family a month ago, after he was arrested and detained for the eighth time since 1989.

He is a local leader of Fatah. Self-rule in Jericho, he says, will mean his children can stop worrying about the Israelis coming to the door. It is a beginning.

But at Friday prayers before Super Monday, Sheik Harb Jaber, the local imam, was a powerful dissenting voice. The peace proposal is against the word of God, he said. The only true solution is an Islamic state on all of the land of Palestine. "The Israelis have stolen the flank of beautiful meat that was Palestine and are throwing us the bones to fight over," he preached.

His views are echoed by the men at Maxim's cafe, where mercifully there is as much iced water as you can drink and three fans whirring. Munir says the Israelis are like a man who had stolen 1,000 dollars from you and was offering to pay only 200 back. "What should I do? Accept the 200 or fight him for the lot?"

Fight him? "Nothing is impossible... what you don't have today you may have tomorrow. In the history of the world the greatest armies have been beaten." A quarter of a loaf is not enough.

But there was little to be seen of such rejectionism in Jericho on Super Monday. The Israeli walls were tumbling down and they were dancing in the streets to acknowledge it. Thousands in the town's square roared their approval when Yitzhak Rabin and Arafat shook hands. Here was hope.

The Israeli walls were tumbling down and they were dancing in the streets to acknowledge it

Jericho will be restored to its former glories, the inhabitants believe. Its present 15,000 people nestling below the 40 days and 40 nights Mount of Temptation, with peace, will become the beneficiaries of a bustling tourist resort. Winter in wonderful Jericho, says one smiling local. The jewel of Cleopatra will shine anew. The money will come from the World Bank, the EC and others to make that possible.

In Mitzpe Jericho, an Israeli settlement of 120 families, three miles as the crow flies from Jericho in the hills, there is no such acclaim. The feeling of betrayal is as real there as the Palestinian flags flying in Jericho below.

Rabin and Peres are lying, the settlers believe. Maybe they are right but maybe it is all too big a risk for us. Maybe all they are doing is making it easier to kill us. "It is suicide to give them the land back. It will take time but they will get ready again and then they will come for us," says Zehava Lazarovich, the headmistress of the settlement's primary school.

Hasn't she spoken to Palestinians to find out what they do now say? "Who do you think built my house?" she says. "We had two years of discussion with the Palestinians who built it. I asked them if they thought the land was theirs why should they build the house for us. They said it would be theirs one day."

Bob Wylie

CITIZENS INCOME & THE LEFT

A Socialist Society conference

10.00am

Saturday 9 October 1993

School of Oriental and African Studies
Thornhaugh Street
Russell Square
London WC1

This conference aims to examine the relevance of Citizens Income (CI) for a new left agenda. Sessions will include CI and the Labour Party, CI for beginners, citizenship, the Unions, market socialism, CI and the minimum wage, green politics and the history of the idea.

Speakers include:
Meghnad Desai
Len Doyal
Ursula Huws
Kate Soper
John Chowcatt (MSF)
Chris Pond (Director, Low Pay Unit)
and many more

Registration fee:
£4.50 (concs £2.00)

The registration fee covers a comprehensive pack of conference papers as well as a beginner's guide to the CI debate

Please let us know if you need childcare facilities

Details from:
Socialist Society, 25 Horsell Road, London N5 1XL
Tel 071-700 3853

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Pacemaker

Remembering past glories: but some are marching to the beat of a different drum

Northern Ireland's Young Unionists want to include Catholics in the party and cut its links with the Orange Order. **Malachi O'Doherty** hears some revolutionary talk

Orangemen are not the only root

Young Unionists are a homogeneous bunch of people, sweaty-palmed boys in their Sunday suits and ties. They don't look like Sinn Feiners.

Young Sinn Feinners wear leather or denim jackets and jeans. When they go to conferences or funerals they dress up by putting on tweed jackets over their shirts but they keep the jeans and definitely don't wear ties, not until they become councillors.

Young Unionists are a mix of university students and sons of farmers, all Protestant, nearly all male. A lot of them giggle when they talk about Catholics or black people.

The first young republicans in the current phase were Christian Brothers' boys with one A level, who drew back from opportunity and dismissed it as the establishment. Now they are Youth Training Programme graduates who are just plain angry.

Young Unionists have no problems with the concept of the establishment, except a growing fear that they are in danger of being excluded from it, if they don't tie their ties tighter and put on English accents. They look as if they are perpetually dressed for the gospel hall, with suits that always look new and hair oiled extravagantly.

The annual conference of the Young Unionists last weekend could hardly have been held at a more beautiful place, right next to the Giant's Causeway in Antrim, where uncannily sculpted hexagonal pillars of basalt emerge from under the sea-blasted topsoil, giving the horrific impression that beneath the warm greenery of Ireland lies cold, formal, artificial reality.

There might be a political metaphor there, say for the crass thinking that lies behind the warm smiles of undoubtedly convivial political activists. Even young Unionists enjoy politics. Most people involved in it here do.

Some of the Young Unionists would like to be at the radical edge of secular Irish politics. These seemed intellectually, if not stylistically, out of place at a conference that was gathering to rally opposition to such "draconian legislation" as the Fair Employment Act and to call for the "ringing off of paramilitary strongholds", most of which are actually housing estates.

There were about 30 delegates of constituency groups gathered in a little hall off the restaurant of the Causeway Hotel, to debate motions on the economy, security policy, capital punishment and links with the Orange Order.

A sampling of the views that were heard with dignified approval and the odd "hear, hear!" will give an idea of where they were coming from.

"This government should spend more on security instead of squandering resources on an extravagant social security policy," said conference chairman Peter Weir.

Graham Craig, in a debate on the economy that concentrated on wasteful efforts to end discrimination, said: "I don't blame Catholics for preferring to draw the dole than work. If you are unskilled and have lots of children, it's a better option. I just don't think they should then blame their high unemployment on Protestants discriminating against them."

I asked Weir to confirm I had got my notes right, because he was repeatedly addressing Craig as "Lennie".

"Oh, we call him Lennie after Lennie Murphy, because he always seemed to have his face buried in the Shankill Butcher's book." The original Lennie Murphy was a grotesque serial killer who tortured and dismembered Catholics in the seventies.

Many Young Unionists haven't yet been as well socialised out of their native bigotry as young republicans have. They provide an opportunity to view bigots in transition.

Republicans are beyond this, partly because most people who speak to them seem to find murder less reprehensible than political naivety, and partly because when you do get asked questions like : "But ought you really to be killing children?"—you either give a polished performance or you go under. Many Young Unionists haven't considered developing the arts of defending themselves.

The debate that I went to the Causeway to hear was the one on whether or not Young Unionists think that the party should "reconsider the formal link between the Ulster Unionist Council and the Orange Order". It was forwarded by a small clique of politics students from Queen's University in Belfast, some of them friends of mine. These radicals of the Young Unionists are naive or adventurous enough to believe that it still isn't too late to dissociate their party from chauvinistic Protestantism and pull in some Catholic members.

There is logic in their plan. Not all Catholics are nationalists. They represent a major political catch to anyone who can provide a political home for them.

The Alliance party has broadly failed to capture them. Those among them who vote at all probably vote for the SDLP, trusting still, despite John Hume's talks with Gerry Adams, that it won't tilt them into serious constitu-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tional upheaval for at least another generation.

The Young Unionist theory is that by breaking the link between the party and the Orange Order, a Protestant secret society, these non-nationalist Catholics would begin to realise that they really belong with them. The chief proponents of this theory are David McDowell and Greg Irwin, the proposer and seconder of the motion.

They made no mention of the embarrassment the order has caused Unionism by parading through Catholic areas

Irwin, who is too young to remember the devolved Unionist government at Stormont, wrote recently in the Unionist Party magazine, the *Ulster Review*, that this period of self-rule had been "a dreadful aberration". This is astonishing language for a member of both the Unionist Party and Orange Order to use.

His article goes on to rationalise the religious discrimination against Catholics as arising from the tenuous position that the party had been placed in by Westminster, ruling over a growing and tetchy minority who were widely assumed to be a fifth column of the Irish Republic.

For most Unionists, conceding that there ever was discrimination is seriously letting the side down, so Irwin's article, for all its timorous rationalisations, must stand as a very brave concession to the need for communal reconciliation. It's just a pity that probably not a single Catholic actually read it.

In Irwin's vision, modern Britain is tolerant and pluralistic. It is that kind of Britain that Unionists should be extolling the virtues of, not an imperialist, Anglo-saxon, Protestant Britain that has vanished without Unionists having noticed.

His conclusion was that only the Ulster Unionist Party could lay the foundations of mass-based non-sectarian politics, by "calling home all those Catholic Unionists to their natural political party".

His article was followed by one from McDowell, which went so far as to say: "Until we remove the Orange Order from the Ulster Unionist Council, we are never going to be a proper British political party—on the one hand we argue that we do not like the Irish Republic because it is a clerical state, while on the other behaving like a purely Protestant communal lobby."

"We do not like the Republic because it is a clerical state, while we act like a purely Protestant lobby"

Anyone who thinks this isn't a revolutionary statement should spend a week in Belfast listening to Radio Ulster's *Talkback* programme.

McDowell added: "There is no point in our pretending to ourselves that we are the party of the Union with a secular liberal state, when the message is blasted out that our party is only for Protestants."

Irwin and McDowell had now brought their campaign before the boys in suits, hard-edged abstemious country boys and dapper political careerists who would play to the mob.

They emphasised their respect for the Orange Order and its "principles of freedom of religious expression", which are more talked about than actually demonstrated. They made no mention of the embarrassment, if any, that the order has caused to Unionism by its insistence on parading through Catholic areas (paramilitary strongholds?), beating drums under Catholic windows and generally insulting the Catholic religion.

David McDowell said that he valued the Orange Order as a piece of living tradition, contrasting it with the "ghastly plastic leprechauns" sold as emblems of Irish culture. He can't have seen the jars of Orange marmalade on sale at a table in the conference room.

Irwin said: "We affront British values of evenhandedness when we deny that Catholics can be British."

Reminded later of what was going on in Millwall, he said: "Well, at least that shows that Britain is struggling to be a diverse and pluralistic society. What are we doing?"

Richard Holmes, speaking against the motion started with a joke about Mickey and Pat driving a combine harvester, then said: "We should leave the bigotry to Ian Paisley", without even noticing that he had contradicted himself.

He was for reform of the party but couldn't see people in west Belfast joining just because they removed the Orange Order delegates.

When he said himself that he was not a member of the Order, as Irwin is, there were cries of "shame!" from the floor.

Christopher Luke argued for keeping the links since, "The Glorious Revolution is the foundation of our liberties."

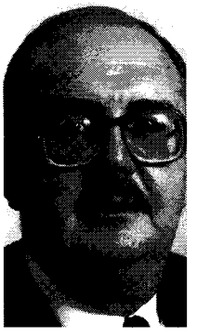
Part of the pragmatic argument was that the Orange Order had members from other political parties, as the trade unions have, and it is absurd to allow them to influence Unionist Party policy, as conservatives in the Unions can influence Labour policy. It was one of the few indications of the whole day that any of these young aspirant politicans had ever read a British national newspaper.

The motion was carried by 18 votes for and 13 against. "The revolution goes on," shouted someone at the back.

In fact, it faltered on. Twenty nine against two voted for internment and the ringing off of the "paramilitary strongholds", but a motion calling for the death penalty for terrorist murder was defeated by two votes.

Greg Irwin says now that the radicals would have lost if the conference hadn't been held in such a remote place. Maybe next year they should meet on Rockall.

INFLUENCES



JOHN EDMONDS
General Secretary, GMB union

What books and authors have had the greatest influence on your political beliefs?
Human Nature in Politics by Graham Wallas; Fred Engels' *Condition of the Working Classes in England in 1844*; A J P Taylor's Origins of the Second World *War*; and, of course, Michael Crichton's *Jurassic Park* (some dinosaurs are both intelligent and durable).

Name one film, one book, one play, and one song or piece of music that you would most like everyone to see, read or hear.
Film: Robert Mulligan's *To Kill a Mocking Bird*—for showing the corrosive effect of prejudice.
Book: Charles Dickens' *Our Mutual Friend*—all you need to know about the British class system.
Play: *Les Misérables*. Justice does have some of the best tunes.
Music: The Trout Quintet or Billie Holiday singing "Painting the Town Red".

In the early stages of your life, which figures stand out as an important influence on you?
My primary school headmaster Richard Crickmer (who showed me a few doors), and Bill McCarthy (who helped me to open one).

What event during your lifetime has had the greatest effect on your political beliefs?
The 1962 Cuba missile crisis—power at its most dangerous. There must be a better way to run the world.

Which political figure—living or dead—do you most admire?
Alive: Nelson Mandela, for having the humanity and the vision to fight persecution without bitterness. Dead: Henry Grattan, who put all the best arguments for parliamentary democracy 200 years ago.

If you could visit any time in history for 24 hours, which would you choose?
The day in August 1917 when, with anti-Bolshevik feeling growing in Russia, Kerensky decided not to move against Lenin.

What do you consider the greatest threat at present to individual freedom and liberty?
Across the world: nationalism, especially when combined with racial or religious prejudice. And in Britain: the obsessive secrecy of our government.

On important matters, whose opinion—other than your own—do you trust most?
On trade unions: Jack Jones. On cricket: Ray Illingworth. On life: Charlie Brown.

Who is the greatest prime minister we never had?
Ernie Bevin—formidable brain power, massive common sense, and a great understanding of what most people want from work and life.

If you could pass one law, what would it be?
A freedom of information act.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Reports of the death of the family may be much exaggerated, says **Yvonne Roberts**, but it *is* ill, and the blame rests with the right, not with feminism

We are becoming divorced from reality

Julia Powell

Thirty years ago, feminists, those alleged saboteurs of "stable" society, whispered in the establishment's ear that marriage in the form of one lifelong marital union was close to death. They highlighted a few of the causes; some argued that only when the male breadwinner was made redundant would the needs and aspirations of the "lesser" members of the family be acknowledged.

"Patriarchy . . . is the sexual politics whereby men establish their power and maintain control . . . its chief institution is the family," wrote Juliet Mitchell in 1971 in *Women's Estate*. The family, for some feminists in those early years, stood for evil and it deserved to die. And so, say the right, in the 1990s, feminism has had its way: holy wedlock RIP.

The consequences? Society is crumbling, "immorality" is our only growth industry; public expenditure is spiralling; commitment has slipped out of the national vocabulary; children are running amok; thirtysomething women are the "new" female underclass (how "new" is a couple of thousand years?) and Michelle Pfeiffer doesn't even have the good grace to disguise her views that motherhood—in between being a film star—is much easier without a husband.

"I really wanted a child," she said in the much quoted *Vanity Fair* interview. "But I didn't want some guy around to drive me nuts."

Sections of the right still hold fast to the idea that the "traditional" nuclear family has been the cornerstone of society for generations. Why? Because biology—if not God—has ordained it should be so. In 1983, for instance, Ferdinand Mount, author of *The Subversive Family*, policy adviser to Thatcher and involved in her much derided Ministerial Family Policy Group, referred to the timeless "duties of care prescribed [for women] by the biological ethic" in the "natural" family.

Ten years later, in 1993, Sheila Lawlor, from the right-wing Centre for Policy Studies, announces that the collapse of the traditional family is due to "the feminist ideology that wants women to free themselves of men". She has found support in the health minister, Tom Sackville, who castigates "feminists who actively campaign" for women to bring up "kids" without benefit or burden of a father. And they look to statistics as an endorsement.

In 1971, there were 570,000 single-parent families. Now the figure is 1.3 million (mostly separated, widowed and divorced). In 1970, 8 per cent of births took place outside marriage; now it is one in three. Cohabitation before marriage was the exception in the 1960s, now it is the norm. In 1961, there were 27,000 divorces a year; now there are more than 164,000. Thirty years ago, 5,000 second and third marriages ended in divorce, now it is 50,000. Divorce in Britain affects almost 40 per cent of marriages—and the rate is the highest in Europe. Four hundred children a day go through such a break-up. Seven million of the population now live in step-families.

It gets worse. Evidence shows that the separated and divorced are more often than not poor—70 per cent of single parents rely on income support. Research indicates that children of divorced parents are twice as likely to leave school without qualifications, more likely to marry in their teens and more prone to face unemployment in their thirties—and to repeat the pattern set by their parents and also to become divorcees.

Divorce in Britain affects 40 per cent of marriages. Seven million people now live in step-families

The cost of breakdown and divorce is significant. So is this definitive evidence that feminism has reduced the family to a state of terminal crisis? Has the desire of men and women to seek a long-term commitment withered on the feminist whine —as some on the right insist?

The answer, of course, is no. A more optimistic interpretation of statistics is that men and women continue to make serious attempts at stable family life. Men and women are delaying marriage and the arrival of the first child, almost all will cohabit first, but relatively few have abandoned the idea of marriage altogether. (Hence, second and even third weddings.)

The number of women having children on their own *is* on the increase, but research indicates that, for most in this small minority, lone motherhood is not because male partners have been found wanting, but because a suitable male partner hasn't been found at all—or once found, he has rapidly disappeared.

Even single parenthood, according to research, lasts not for a life, but on average for three to four years. As for those feminists who argued for the death of dad, and for separatism, they still exist, but much of feminist writing today concentrates not on abandoning the idea of long-term relationships but on how best they can be renegotiated—privately between individuals, and publicly with employers and government.

Susie Orbach, Lynne Segal and Anna Coote, among others, have long argued that a strong and balanced family requires a man to be *more* involved in family life, not less. The days when women were castigated by feminists for *liking* motherhood ("false consciousness") have long gone (although the damage such views did to feminism's popular appeal has not). Instead, many of today's feminists argue for policies that would drastically change the workplace—to the benefit of women and men—so job and family become more in balance; job-share, shorter working weeks, paternity leave; improved maternity rights; an end to the macho work culture.

For many, the attraction of succeeding in a long-term relationship remains, but what has unquestionably altered, in a relatively short

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

time, are the reasons why women and men enter into and exit out of marriage; the belief that marriage is women's *only* option and the assumption that a partnership is automatically for life.

"The great world was so obviously a man's, it was only within marriage that an ordinary woman could hope to find equality and dignity," wrote Philip Roth of the 1950s in *My Life As a Man*. "Unattached, a woman was supposedly not even able to go out to the movies by herself, let alone perform an appendectomy or drive a truck."

Forty years on, a woman no longer needs marriage to provide status, security, income or the only access to motherhood. Likewise, for men, becoming a bridegroom no longer affirms his position as head of the household, offers him a housekeeper for life or guarantees his children are his property until he dies.

At the same time, how we behave in marriage is not inhibited by what the neighbours say, what the church pontificates or by the prevailing moral consensus, which previously used stigma and shame as brakes on "immorality". That consensus was shored up by the hypocrisy of shotgun marriages and it concealed the nastiness in the form of mental and physical abuse and incest of some of the "nicest" families. What a man did to his family was his own private concern.

Now, marriage faces its toughest test. It's increasingly based on what one individual can offer another in terms of commitment, respect, sex, love, friendship and understanding—at a time when the expectations of men and women have never been pumped higher (in part by feminists) and there has never been more confusion between the sexes about the messages each is sending the other on precisely what commitment, respect, intimacy and so on, actually involve.

Penny Mansfield and Jean Collard of the Marriage Research Centre have followed 65 couples—now reduced by divorce to 48—since their wedding day in 1979. Fiona McAllister, the project's research officer, explains that men and women go into marriage with radically different expectations.

"Women want to share emotions, spend time with their partner, expect him to be a confidant. A lot of husbands feel that this isn't required, just 'being' married is enough. Few men can easily negotiate for what they want . . ." (The project appears to show that those couples who do continually renegotiate and who share chores, survive best.)

What makes all these changes even tougher is the fact that they are taking place while the government damagingly continues to formulate policy and peddle propaganda as if the traditional nuclear family—dad at work, mum at home, 2.2 children—is the norm. Instead, of course, the "norm" applies only to 15 per cent of the total number of families—and the majority of women are now in work. The circumstances in which Beveridge, in 1942, devised the welfare state—full employment, the male breadwinner—are no more. "Once they (the government) are forced to stop treating women as the financial responsibility of their partners, governments can decide whether to acknowledge and reward these women as workers or as carers," Lynda Bransbury of the Local Government Information Unit has said.

Labour, in setting up the Commission for Social Justice, has taken heed. The Tories, too, are reappraising the welfare state but since their first allegiance is to cut public expenditure and their second is to hold up their tattered banner as "the party of the (traditional) family"—the chances of the emergence of a radical national strategy, which the modern family requires, are slim.

In truth, of course, the Tories are not so much the party of family as the party of paradox. Some of its members believe you can "make" individuals revert back to the behaviour of the 1950s through punitive restrictions on housing and income support. They also remain blind to the fact that so many of the government's own measures, underpinned by the Thatcherite philosophy of looking after number one, have done more damage to the collaborative values of the strong and healthy family than any pronouncement by us wicked wimmin.

"Domestic life . . . must soon be at an end; society will consist of individuals no longer grouped in families," wrote Lord Shaftesbury over 150 years ago. If we are to understand what has happened to the nuclear family and how best we manoeuvre from here, we first have to acknowledge that the family has *always* been in a state of transition. It has always been reshaped and remodelled, not by feminist plots but by a whole range of complex influences—not least the capitalist demands of the labour market.

The work of John Gillis and Professor Lawrence Stone among others has proved that "the traditional nuclear family" is about as traditional as Mr Kipling's cakes. In the 17th, 18th and 19th century, the working class often cohabited, frequently had children out of wedlock and because of the much shorter lifespan, single parenthood was common.

Mr Mount's female "biological" urge was not allowed to prevent every member of the extended family—men, women and children—being kept busy in work. Today, as the gap between rich and poor widens, the market remains just as influential. The "family wage" earned by the man is no longer sufficient, while the woman who is the sole breadwinner works, not so much as an expression of her emancipation, but because she must.

Likewise, the marketplace has been an influence on the male in other ways. In the 1950s, the new consumerist society accelerated what writer Barbara Ehrenreich terms man's "flight from commitment". Why spend your money on the wife and kids, when you can enjoy a subscription to Hugh Hefner's *Playboy* and listen to a new hi-fi? More re-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE LEFT FIGHTS BACK ON ECONOMIC POLICY

Elections are won and lost on economic issues. Yet policy ideas and debate have been sorely missing from the left scene during the Tory years.

New Economy, the new economic policy journal from the IPPR, aims to recapture the ground vacated by the failure of free market economics, challenge the domination of debate by City economists and build confidence in alternative approaches to economic management.

New Economy

New Economy is accessible to economists and non-economists alike. Covering all aspects of economic policy, this new quarterly is essential and exciting reading for all those hoping to make change possible.

SOME FORTHCOMING ARTICLES

- **Rethinking Economics** - *Paul Ormerod*
- **What's So Bad About Borrowing?** - *Simon Wren-Lewis*
- **Why Taxes Have To Go Up To Save The Welfare State** - *Bob Rowthorn*
- **Is Green Growth Possible?** - *Terry Barker*

IPPR
INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC POLICY RESEARCH

New Economy is published for the IPPR by Academic Press

NEW ECONOMY ORDER FORM

ISSN: 1070-3535
Annual subscription (Volume 1, 1994, 4 issues)
Institutional rate: £95 - Personal rate: £40
Special offer to New Statesman & Society readers: £25
(special offer for Volume 1, 1994, 4 issues only)

☐ Please send me a free sample copy
☐ Please enter my subscription for New Economy, volume 1, 1994, 4 issues
☐ I enclose a cheque/P.O./Eurocheque for £_____*(payable to Harcourt Brace & Company Ltd)*
☐ I wish to pay by credit card. Amount £_____
(Diners Club/ Barclaycard (VISA)/ American Express/ MasterCard)
(delete as appropriate)
No._____ExpiryDate_____
(MasterCard users should add the numbers above their name)
Signature_____
(Your signature is essential, especially when paying by credit card)

Name *(CAPITALS)*_____
Address_____
_____
_____
_____
Post Code _____

Return order form to:
Nina Stibbe
Academic Press
Marketing Department
24-28 Oval Road
London NW1 7DX, UK
Or FREEPOST, London NW1 1YA, UK
Tel: (44) 071-267 4466

AP0893/NS2

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cently, the traditional role of the breadwinner has been given a mortal blow by the decline in the macho industries. Both sexes are now part of a "feminised" labour force, a euphemism for low pay, casualised part-time work and too few rights.

A household with two full-time wage-earners, but only one who doubles as a domestic servant, is under strain. A family where both partners are out of work and trying to rear children on £120 a week is under strain. A family in which the woman works, acts as housewife and attempts to shore up a demoralised, unemployed "head of household" is under strain. And not a feminist in sight.

Add to these influences on the family, the Pill; the sexual revolution, which bluntly meant that a poke was possible without a marriage proposal; improved education for women; the "no blame" change in the divorce law and the arrival of the pioneers of the second wave of feminism, like Betty Friedan, and we might begin to wonder why the divorce rate isn't even higher than it is.

Recently, even sections of the establishment have begun to address the question of the family in more than terms of a feminist plot. For instance, Alistair Burt, junior social security minister, has said that the neglect of even materially advantaged children comes from the increasing pressures placed by employers on two parents in work. His fellow minister, John Redwood, advocated that absent fathers should somehow be coerced back into the family (at the same time as Lord Parkinson was explaining that he has never seen the child he had with his former secretary, Sarah Keays, because: "I just don't think it would contribute anything to her life.") The Mothers' Union has decided that the traditional nuclear family was never that hot anyway and that we should look again at the extended clans of the Old Testament, while some of the tabloids have been surprisingly sympathetic to the Home Alone mother, giving attention to the appalling lack of affordable childcare, not just damning her as "bad".

So where do we go from here? Suggestions are well rehearsed. They begin in school. The national curriculum has almost squeezed out personal and social education. Sex education is now optional, family-planning clinics have been drastically hit by cuts and many drop-in advice centres for teenagers have been closed because of a lack of funds. Projects that encourage teenage boys to take more responsibility for parenting are all too rare—while equal opportunities schemes, which were intended to help teenage girls to acquire the kind of self-esteem that equips them to say "No" and raise their sights beyond pregnancy at 16, have all but disappeared.

The story is repeated for adults. Counselling and self-help support groups are sparse and underfunded as are mediation services to cope once divorce is agreed. After divorce or separation, research indicates that the most damage to children is caused by lack of access to both parents. Men and women have to accept that such deprivation is unfair; counselling could help.

Financially, the system of benefits that affects a single parent amounts to modern-day feudalism. Most jobs are so low-paid that, without help with child care, a woman cannot afford to work. If she chooses to remain at home, she can raise her children only with extreme difficulty on the limited amount allowed by government.

Last month, the National Child Development Study, which has followed 11,500 individuals (now in their thirties) since they were born, published its most recent conclusions. It reported that 12 per cent of female thirty-somethings were bringing up children alone; 10 per cent were cohabiting; 19 per cent of women and 6 per cent of men were living in step-families. The report concluded that because so many of the women were in part-time work which affects levels of pension, they were caught in an economic spiral.

"Marital breakdown is causing a new female underclass," declared the *Independent*. (It isn't marital breakdown that causes a new underclass, it's the way in which the system handles it). "Women bear burden of failed dreams," declared the *Guardian*.

In truth, what the survey indicated is that, in spite of being trapped in an economic ghetto, many single parents shunned the idea that their married colleagues were happier (a view only one in ten supported). Research elsewhere endorses the idea that women have fewer regrets than men after divorce (men also tend to experience poorer health and their work performance suffers; women appear to achieve more). In 1988, for example, Gwynn Davis and Mervyn Munch of Bristol University took a sample of 271 people—over half the men had regrets after divorce but only a quarter of the women did. Of those who had remarried, nearly twice as many men (37 per cent) as women wished they had remained with their previous partner.

Most jobs are so low-paid that, without help with child care, a woman cannot afford to work

The National Child Development Study, backed by others, appears to show that women are prepared to opt out of difficult relationships *no matter what the financial hardship*. This gives the lie to the view of the right that if you only make the alternatives to marriage financially less attractive, women will do the right thing and stick with hubby. It's a view that doesn't place much faith in the inherent pleasures of the institution.

Feminists would argue that healthy, long-lived relationships have a better chance of taking place when both adults can negotiate from a position of economic and emotional strength. The view of the right is that the policies this would require are precisely those that will serve only to accelerate the breakdown of the nuclear family in which there is only one head of the house.

For instance, we need universal sex education and preparation for family life in schools; we need adequate counselling services; an official minimum standard of living; income support at realistic levels so that a mother or father can stay at home to rear children if they so choose; an improvement in the legal position of cohabitees; the opportunity to keep maintenance and some earnings without forefeiting benefit; adequate childcare; independent taxation for men and women; and we need more research on how and why modern relationships break down—and what makes them work.

A national strategy for the family, however, doesn't just demand a set of fresh governmental policies—it also requires much more of a debate on the moral dilemmas that relationships in the 1990s raise. At what point does a person's "right" to happiness outweigh a duty to stay together "for the sake of the children"? How are the happiness and welfare of sons and daughters measured against a parent's search for new relationships? Where does self-fulfillment end and selfishness begin? Who says that for an economically independent woman to leave a man on grounds of boredom, take his children and demand the joint home, is unfair? Who tells some men that once they father, other duties follow?

The left and some feminists find it easy to mock figures on the right, such as Mary Whitehouse and Mary Kenny, who busy themselves with simplistic answers to such questions. But, in a time of change, they push the comforting illusion that it was all so much better before. A vacuum on the left where counter-arguments should exist; the lack of an attempt to create a new consensus on what is responsible behaviour in terms of commitment and obligation in a relationship and parenthood, leaves the right with a monopoly on the panic button.

Perhaps, too, on the issue of the family, it's time for feminists who have, rightly, pointed the finger of criticism at men to acknowledge when change in male behaviour does occur?

The National Child Development survey indicates, for instance, that women do 77 per cent of cooking, 66 per cent of shopping, 75 per cent of cleaning and 85 per cent of laundry. Ten years ago, every figure would have been in the 90s. A little feminist self-honesty might also concede that, in a period of transition, a sea of ambivalence can swamp even the most politically right-on. For example, many women say they want men to do more in the house only to resist when they try to "muscle in" on traditional female territory. Likewise, some men say they seek an independent-minded woman with a life of her own, but they then refuse to take on their share of domestic and childcare duties, which would allow that to happen. And so the struggle goes on.

In the 1990s, the word "family" already means a range of relationships, "including gay couples, cohabitees, househusbands at home and single male parents. A much greater degree of contentment and success might be possible for all, and a lot less trauma and impoverishment encountered by many, if the government took courage and worked with the tide of change, not against it. The family is robust; it will survive—but the number of casualties shouldn't have to be so high.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

What happened to the goal of full employment? Contrary to conventional opinion, argues **Frank Field**, it can be achieved, and Labour could achieve it

Let's get to work

The elimination of full employment as the major objective of economic policy has been the most silent and deadly of Mrs Thatcher's revolutions. It has done more than any other single government act to pauperise many of our fellow citizens and rob them of a sense of dignity and worth. And yet there is no debate, let alone challenge, on this issue. Why has there been such an intellectual and political collapse on this front? Restoring full employment is no easy objective. What are the immediate moves that the government could take in order to establish a level of unemployment below 500,000 as a major objective of policy?

The immediate postwar years tell of success. For the first time ever, western Europe experienced a period of full employment. There had never been such a sustained period when those wishing to work had been able to.

This golden period, for that is how it appears now, lasted well into the 1960s. Events then changed swiftly. Unemployment, which had fluctuated at around 300,000 in the early postwar period, had doubled by January 1967. The upward movement had begun, rising to over a million early on in the Heath government, to 1.5 million by mid-1976, and to three million in 1982. That too is today's figure. While almost all forecasters believe that there may be some economic recovery during 1993, none predicts that growth will be strong enough to prevent unemployment from mounting still further.

This tale of woe is merely the presentation of the official statistics. Since 1979 there have been 27 changes in the way unemployment data is computed, and almost all have given a downward push to the official numbers. An accurate figure would mean adding about a million to today's total.

There is no debate, let alone challenge, on this issue. Why has there been such an intellectual collapse?

So why isn't unemployment *the* burning political issue, commanding a major part of the government's time and that of parliament? What are the trade unions and employers up to? Why do we all go about pretending our business is more important than attending to this issue? Why has the political debate about those without work turned sour?

Part of the blame must lie with those politicians who, from the mid-1960s, let the situation deteriorate and unemployment levels rise. Once that started to happen there was rarely a point of such significant change that a new approach was demanded. One such point, however, did occur during the Heath government, when unemployment rose for the first time in the postwar world to over a million (a rise in 1947 occurred, but was temporary), but the consequences have influenced political debate. Some government policies were reversed, culminating in the disastrous credit boom strategy carried out by the then chancellor, Lord Barber. Politicians ever since have made much of this mismanagement as a reason for not attempting to pursue full employment policies again.

This was the position Mrs Thatcher inherited as her government went about publicly confirming that a full-employment policy could no longer be a prime political objective of governments. Full-employment wasn't a realisable objective—even to talk in such terms would lead to a cruel deception of those without work.

It cannot be said that this success in dethroning the full-employment objective has been won in the teeth of great political opposition, and unemployment hardly appears on the agenda of economists. It is time to call a halt to this retreat and to make full employment a major subject of political debate. As a first move, Labour MPs need to express more effectively the despair and hopelessness of so many of their constituents. This righteous anger needs to be followed by Labour committing itself to working out how to achieve full employment, but there are a number of major institutional barricades in the way.

The first obstacle is the public sector borrowing requirement (PSBR). According to the government's own figures, PSBR is expected to rise to a staggering £50 billion in 1993-94. Even after the record tax increase in the 1993 budget, the Chancellor still expects the PSBR to be around the £37 billion mark at the end of this parliament. No western government has ever run a budget deficit of this magnitude before, so it is impossible to say with any historical insight what the likely consequences will be.

The other part of this Tory "double whammy" concerns the balance of payments. Britain, even when in deep recession, turned in a £1 billion deficit each month on its trade account. In 1981, the balance of payments was in handsome surplus to the tune of £8 billion. It was possible then to advocate reflating the economy out of recession without being ambushed by a balance of payments crisis. Reflating with a balance of payments deficit is a very different matter. It is not

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

More attractive job centres (right) are the government's answer to the abandonment of full employment and miserable benefit levels

impossible that, if we are forced to finance a growing trade deficit brought about by reflating the economy, the debt repayment may become larger than the resulting increase in national income.

The record PSBR and current account deficit are now interacting, affecting the level at which the British economy can grow. The treasury badly needs to increase the rate of growth in order to bring down the PSBR level. More people in work means higher tax revenues and lower social security expenditure, leaving a much reduced PSBR. Economic growth, starting from the basis of a weak balance of trade, will, however, soon run up against an unsustainable trade gap. A 3 per cent growth rate is required to begin reducing the level of unemployment and the PSBR. However, given the effect of a mounting trade deficit, Bill Martin of the merchant bank UBS Phillips and Drew estimates that a further deterioration in the current account deficit will restrict growth to a mere 1 per cent. But the price of containing the current account deficit is a further rise in the already massive PSBR.

Senior economists have failed to address the question of persistent long-term unemployment

The second major obstacle to full employment is the structure of the deregulated financial services sector. Stuart Holland estimates that 90 per cent of foreign exchange transactions are now currency speculation, as opposed to 10 per cent at the time of exchange controls. Moreover, half of the money gained by foreign exchange deals came from speculating in European currencies. One lesson to draw from these events, which is developed later, is the need for concerted European action, not only in combating international currency speculation, but in attempting to move back to full employment.

Another view is that a successfully productive economy capable of generating low levels of employment requires a financial sector that serves the needs of the productive sector, rather than the reverse.

Yet another urgent task is to get the pensions industry to see that the next stage of its development must be to channel a greater proportion of pension savings directly into investment, rather than allowing them to be absorbed into the buying of securities (ie, the ownership of existing capital stock). With an extraordinary amount of national savings now directed into pension funds, this reform is important if the financing of British industry is to be put on an equal footing with its competitors.

The third institutional barrier to full employment stems from the need to be able to ensure that the level of aggregate demand in the economy is adequate to meet the full employment target. This country's increasing propensity to import was mentioned earlier. In adjusting the level of aggregate demand, this development must be taken into account. The weakening of our industrial base suggests that any counter-unemployment stimulus should come from an increase in investment aimed at improving the country's infrastructure, as this has little effect initially on the demand for imports.

Finally, a way has to be found to deal with the inflationary pressures that are exacerbated in the economy as it is expanded, and particularly as the economy approaches full employment. On this front, Labour will need to drop its traditional silence and speak out for countering wage-push inflation.

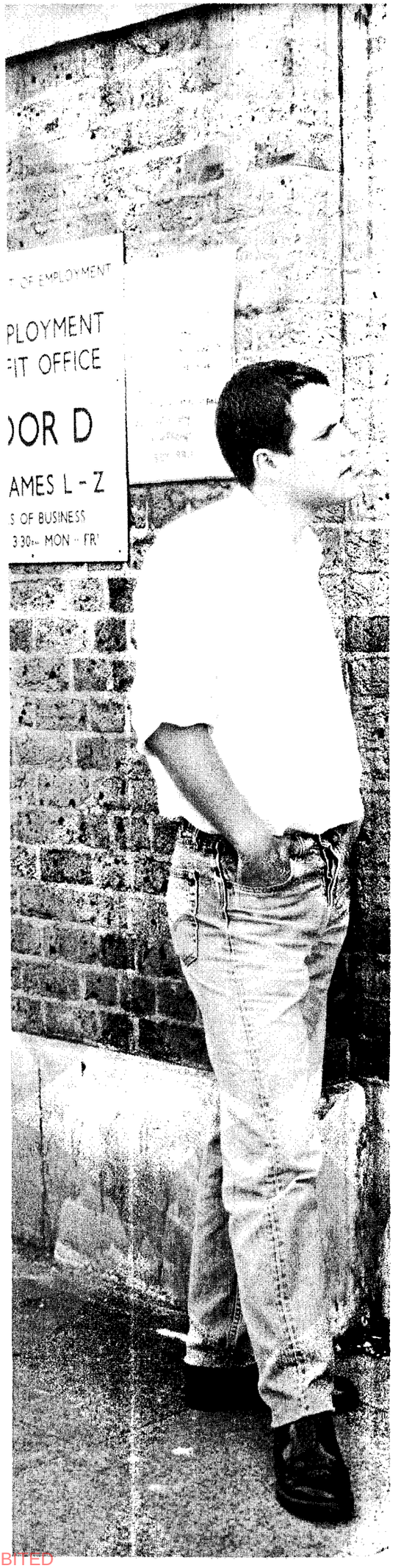
In some ways this last obstacle will be more difficult to surmount than the others that have been mentioned. For the plain truth is that we simply do not yet know how we can successfully contain wage-push pressures as the economy moves towards full employment. We therefore need to ask why it is that employees feel the only opportunity they have to defend their interests is through pay demands. I have advocated the enfranchisement of pension funds so individuals have the right to own the considerable share of capital they and their employers have built up within the firm's pension scheme. I believe that, to some extent, this fundamental change in the ownership of British industry could itself lead to a change in attitudes that will be conducive to running the economy at a high level of employment without prices rising rapidly. Wage and salary demands will not be pitched at some unseen *rentier* class, for the worker himself will know exactly what his own *rentier* class status is.

No one can be under any illusion that the move back to full employment will be easy, so Labour should establish a Commission for Economic Opportunity to begin the task of working out the necesssary policies.

The commission should view the creation of full employment as an issue that must be tackled at an EC level. Instead of trying to persuade the country of the wisdom of Maastricht, would not a more constructive approach be to debate what institutional moves are necessary within the EC to meet clearly defined employment level objectives? The Maastricht treaty, and following treaties, would, therefore, be based on Europe needing to adapt its institutions to meet real objectives, rather than to fit in with an abstract theory about European union.

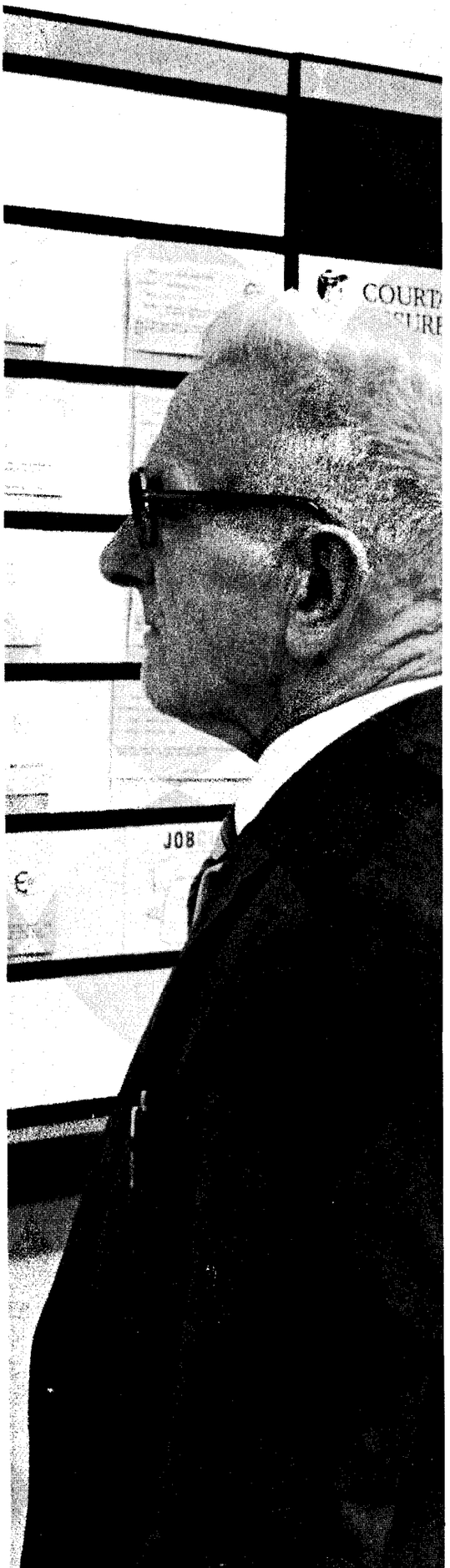
Senior economists, generally speaking, have failed to address themselves at all to the questions of why there is such persistent long-term unemployment, and at such a high level, and of what can be done to combat this situation. Here a lesson can be learned from the US, where the Council for Economic Advisors, which was itself formed by the 1946 Full Employment Act, managed, against the odds, to maintain employment as a national issue even during the Reagan years.

A number of factors accounted for the golden age of full employment after the second world war, one of which was the Marshall Plan. Finance from that programme ensured western Europe could get back to work and



Sally and Richard Greenhill

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



that it would have the money to buy the goods and services that its inhabitants both needed and could produce. With most of eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union having the greatest of difficulties in making a successful transfer from a state to a free market, a similar Group of Seven initiative is required today. It would help to revive eastern Europe, and what was the USSR, and so provide new and expanding export markets for our goods.

Second, the strategic position of the German economy must be recognised and acted upon, despite the phobia we have about it in Britain. There is a reluctance to accept the role that Germany now plays in western Europe, and indeed, on the world stage. I leave aside its emerging political role. Economically, it is Europe's dominant force. What happens to the German economy, therefore, has a major impact on all the economies in the European Community, as well as those of the surrounding territories.

The third proposal looks to Europe. For those wishing to promote the cause of Europe in terms of economic union, dealing with unemployment offers a major opportunity. That aim should be the starting block for all discussions of how well EC institutions service Europe, as well as looking at what economic and organisational reforms are necessary. Common European interests need to be emphasised along the following lines.

First, once a package of EC financial help for what was East Germany has been agreed, the British government should attempt to get agreement to coordinate a lowering of interest rates throughout Europe.

Second, in an attempt to increase trade among member nations, Britain should propose a cut in VAT to operate uniformly throughout the EC for all those economies where GDP is falling. The government should also propose that any additional increase in public expenditure, now aimed at creating jobs, should be exempt from the 3 per cent overall budget deficit conditions that are part of the Maastricht Treaty. Last, the government should mobilise the antagonism against currency speculators that is now Europe-wide. A common tax on currency speculation is long overdue.

There are two other actions the British government can take immediately. The first is concerned with eliminating the fiscal discrimination against the creation of full-time jobs. To ensure that the spread of part-time jobs is not the only option for employers expanding the job base, the structure of national insurance contributions should be overhauled. Currently, there are no contributions from employers or employees if the latter earn less than £56 per week.

Employers' contributions should become payable on the first pound of a worker's earnings. As the aim would not be to raise additional revenue (and thereby tax job creation in a general way), the move should be revenue neutral. Contributions for other workers would fall. The overall rate of the employers' contribution to the National Insurance Fund would not rise.

An available initiative is to challenge the "cartel" the employed have organised against the unemployed

The other main initiative immediately open to the government is to challenge the "cartel" the employed have organised against the unemployed. This ganging-up process is operated through a wage and salary bargaining machinery.

There is talk that German trade unions are beginning to challenge this cartel arrangement. Their idea is to offer to freeze wage and salary settlements, provided that any productivity increase is set aside to create new jobs. This is one challenge which those inside the employment cartel should pick up. The consequences would have to be spelled out. It would mean a salary and wage standstill for most workers. That, with current inflation, would mean a cut of 3 per cent or so in living standards each year. Is this a price workers would pay to offer a hand up to those in the dole queue? I believe it is.

A greater challenge would be to begin discussing with the employment cartel what their attitude would be to a fully fledged work sharing proposal. The aim here would be to set out what would be involved now if full employment was to be achieved by a work-sharing approach. A single example illustrates the size of the redistribution which such an approach entails. If every member of the employment cartel were prepared to accept a 12.5 per cent cut in hours worked and wages or salaries drawn and if the released resources went to creating jobs for those who are unemployed, Britain could return to full employment in a relatively short space of time. The buck, of course, stops with each of us in the employment cartel.

Of all groups of claimants the worst treated are the jobless, yet these are the very people who have been conscripted into Britain's unemployment army to wage war on inflation. My last proposal is for an unemployment tax that would be levied through the national insurance scheme on all of us in employment. The sums raised would be used to finance more adequate benefits for the unemployed.

This proposal would have two immediate advantages. The first is that it would raise the living standards of the unemployed, in particular those who have been out of the labour market longest, since the benefits could be directed particularly towards them. Second, the disappearance of pounds from the pockets of those in the employment cartel would help to concentrate the electorate's mind on the need for the government to move the economy back to full employment.

Most of us in the western world have experienced living in an age of full employment. That goal is not, therefore, a foolish illusion peddled by a few left-wing cranks. It is a political objective that has been achieved and could be achieved once again.

This is an edited excerpt from Frank Field's new book, "An Agenda for Britain", published by HarperCollins at £6.99

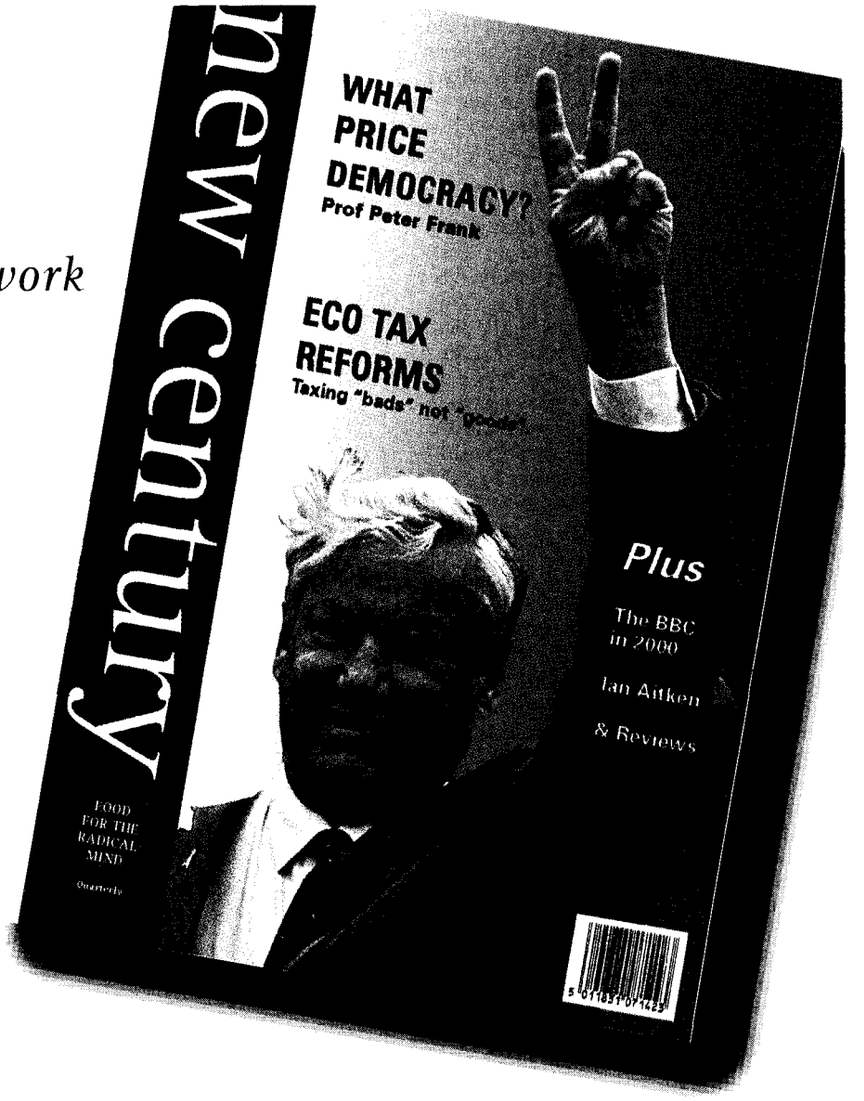
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

new century
a new magazine

new century
a new network

meet new ideas
meet new people

THE
COMPLETE
POLITICAL
PARTICIPATION
PACKAGE.



International,
Economic, Management,
Social, Political &
Environmental
comment from:

BEN PIMLOTT
IAN AITKEN
SUE RICHARDS
DAVID GEE.... *and many more.*

with events
around the UK to match

SAVE MONEY PAY
£2.25/month (£27/year)
BY DIRECT DEBIT

No price increase without prior notice

REDUCED RATE
£1.50/month (£18/year)
for pensioners, students & unemployed

Please send me a subscription to **new century** magazine & **new century network**.

NAME..... ADDRESS.....

..... POSTCODE..... TEL.....

I enclose a cheque for £28.80 ❑ (tick)/ Or save £1.80

INSTRUCTION TO YOUR BANK / BUILDING SOCIETY TO PAY DIRECT DEBITS Please complete this form to instruct your branch to make payments from your account
Then return to:

NEW CENTURY SUBSCRIPTIONS
STEPHENSON HOUSE
BLETCHLEY
MK2 2EW

The Manager.....Bank / Building Society

Address.....

.....

Name(s) of account holder.....

.....

Account number ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Sort code ☐☐☐☐☐☐

DIRECT Debit

Please tick the appropriate box(es):

❑ Reduced rate
please debit my/our account:
❑ yearly
❑ quarterly
❑ monthly

I / We instruct you until further notice in writing to pay direct debits from my/our account at the request of New Century Magazine Ltd.The amounts are variable and may be debited on various dates only after giving me / us prior notice. I / We understand that if any direct debit is paid which breaks the terms of this Instruction, the bank / building society will make a refund.

Signature(s).....

.....

Date.....

Banks / Building Societies may refuse to accept instructions to pay Direct Debits from some types of accounts other than current accounts.

❑ tick here if you do not wish to receive promotional mailing. Originators I.D number: 974074

0 0 4

New Century Subscription information and general enquiries **0908 371981**

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"The Labour Party is like a vehicle. If you drive at great speed, all the people in it are either so exhilarated or so sick that you have no problems. But when you stop, they all get out and argue about which way to go."— *Harold Wilson. From the programme for The Hare Trilogy "Absence of War", at the Royal National Theatre*

Down on Brighton seafront, the battle of the mods and trads is about to begin. But how much is there to choose between them, asks **Sarah Baxter**

The thorns in Labour's side

Trads versus mods, Bennites versus Healeyites, Bevanites versus Gaitskellites. It's the same old story. The difference is that with each passing battle, the share of the spoils has diminished.

There is more buzz and excitement surrounding the Labour Party conference in Brighton than there has been for years. It is not just the media that are looking forward to the occasion. Participants feel openly nostalgic about the chance to relive some of the great battles of the past.

So tight is the arithmetic over one member, one vote that John Smith cannot be sure of victory until the last card vote has been counted. All eyes will be on the potential "switch" unions, in particular, the MSF. The cameras will track the whispering and intrigue between the union barons. Look! There's John Edmonds, having a word with Roger Lyons. And, over there, in the corner, who's that plotting with Tom Sawyer?

Comparisons will be made with those heady days in 1981, when a few big unions threw their lot in with Tony Benn. If John Smith's proposals are defeated, the question will be whether 1985 is repeated. Will Smith "do a Kinnock" and treat the GMB like Militant? Will he succeed in stamping his authority on the party?

Delegates have traditionally gone to conference expecting a good dust-up. In this respect, Neil Kinnock's last years in office proved a great disappointment. Smith is no orator, but he has hit on an issue that can rouse his party. There is nothing Labour likes better than a flaming constitutional row.

But the long years out of office have taken the edge off the party's internal wrangles. Modernisers can call for this and traditionalists for that, but neither camp knows for sure whether its formulations will be enough to return Labour to power.

Labour is still reeling from its election defeat. No matter how high its opinion poll ratings, everyone connected with the party feels a failure.

After the 1983 debacle, the way forward was obvious. A change in the party leader would bring immediate returns. Not enough, however, to secure Labour power.

After 1987, the choice seemed equally straightforward. Labour had to modernise or face electoral oblivion. Lawson's phantom economic miracle kept the Tories ahead in the polls way after the election. It was this that enabled Kinnock to obtain the consent of the soft left for the reforms ahead. But the door to Number Ten remained firmly shut.

Did Labour fail in 1992 because Kinnock's work was incomplete? Or was it because too many socialist values had been ditched? This goes to the heart of the mods and trads split.

The collapse of the Conservatives has complicated matters. If Labour were behind in the polls, the modernisers would undoubtedly be in the ascendant. As it is, the Tories may self-destruct, although it would be foolish to count on it. Now is the time, say the traditionalists, for Labour to keep faith with the left.

Already, the terms of the debate have shifted. We heard a lot more in the immediate aftermath of the election about Lib-Lab co-operation and changing the voting system than now. In those days, the mods and trads were also in greater agreement.

Take one member, one vote. It was Bryan Gould who raised the issue in the Labour leadership campaign, while John Smith was derided for ducking the issue at his opening press conference. Or take taxation. It was Gould who criticised "the cap on aspirations" set by Smith's shadow budget.

The boundaries remain blurred between the different Labour factions. Within the shadow cabinet, there are loosely three camps. The dominant modernisers are Tony Blair, Gordon Brown and Harriet Harman (with the encouragement of Kinnock). In the centre is a loyalist soft-left group, made up of Robin Cook, Jack Straw, Frank Dobson and Chris Smith. Then there are the two former Gould supporters, David Blunkett and Michael Meacher, who are willing to speak guardedly on matters outside their portfolios, such as the economy and Europe. John Prescott is *sui generis*, but even more forthright.

In the two soft-left camps, one can see traces of the old Supper Club, which became active during the Gulf war, and was intended to revive the loyalist left after Kinnock was considered to have moved too far to the right. The soft-left members of the shadow cabinet now have good relations with the resurgent Tribune Group. Their biggest dispute with the modernisers concerns

Peter Schrank

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

economic policy. They all have their doubts about Gordon Brown's tactics.

Being loyalists, that message is coded. But it is there, nevertheless, in their statements and policy documents. *Making Britain's Future*, by shadow trade and industry secretary Robin Cook, contains a decidedly Keynesian passage about the instability of the business cycle. There is a meticulously drafted sentence that runs: "Any attempt to regenerate Britain's economy by pulling the levers of demand management is doomed to failure unless it also tackles . . . problems on the supply side." Note the careful use of the word "also". Cook wants those levers to be pulled.

David Blunkett, the shadow health secretary, raised a few eyebrows last month by launching a series of speeches in defence of public spending. "We must shape thinking and not merely be shaped by the dogma of the last decade," he said pointedly. Rather cheekily, he then went on to append a "note for editors" to the press release about the speeches, which quoted from Brown's new economic policy document. This was a double-bluff. Did he mean you couldn't put a cigarette paper between his views and Brown's? Or was he reminding Brown not to forget Labour's social conscience? The press release was headed: "Blunkett puts equity back on the political agenda." Who had taken it off?

The press release was headed: "Blunkett puts equity back on the political agenda." Who had taken it off?

The soft left took offence when Brown launched his economic policy document in August, while most of the shadow cabinet was on holiday. "We were bounced into a policy of no tax increases," they cry. So was John Smith, the more suspicious of them speculate (a claim dismissed as "ridiculous" by sources close to the leader).

Brown's shadow cabinet critics have been quietly sympathetic to the challenge to his economics made by members of the Tribune Group. They supported Peter Hain (the group secretary) and Roger Berry's attempt to get a pamphlet on the economy published under the group's name. The mistake, they say, was for Hain and Berry to put figures to levels of borrowing and tax increases. Sticking to broad Keynesian principles would have been less inflammatory—and would have given Brown and his allies less opportunity to ridicule their calculations. The National Institute of Economic and Social Research's computer is rumoured to have gone beserk when fed with Hain and Berry's calculations, although the institute officially denies all knowledge of this.

Yet how much of a real gulf is there between the mods and trads on economics? And how much posturing is going on? The elections to the national executive (and the shadow cabinet) always bring out the worst in Labour politicians. But that is too simple an explanation for the behind-the-scenes conflict.

There was a serious disagreement about the case for devaluation last year, and there are genuine differences of opinion about levels of borrowing. But on tax increases, even Hain and Berry were only arguing for hitting the the £50,000-plus bracket. Come the election, they will rally around Brown. Nobody wants to trifle with Labour's precarious reputation for economic competence.

Insofar as the labels mods and trads have any bearing, the main difference has to do with politics, not economics. It is about the message Labour should be sending to voters.

The modernisers want the Tories labelled as the party of devaluation and high taxation. They are determined to squeeze every ounce they can out of the government's disarray. They are afraid that, if Labour sends out the "tax and spend" message, they will squander the gains of the Kinnock years. Labour has still not returned to its share of the vote in 1979, they warn. This is no time to revive the voters' distrust.

The trads, on the other hand, complain that Labour's core values are being sacrificed. If Labour looks as though it has abandoned its principles, voters will desert it. But it is the collapse of old beliefs, such as nationalisation, that has led the trads to regard spending commitments as the proof that Labour is still socialist.

The trads versus mods split has even less relevance when it comes the argument over one member, one vote. Blair and Brown are perceived to be in one camp (and bent on "breaking the links" with the unions). Others, such as John Prescott, are considered to be sound. Yet Prescott is the orginator of the levy-plus scheme and risked the wrath of John Edmonds to present it at the GMB's conference. He sometimes despairs of persuading anyone to see him as anything but a two-dimensional class warrior. He himself panders to this image by blaming "the beautiful people" for Labour's ills, but he is no die-hard traditionalist.

On constitutional issues, Robin Cook is probably the most modernising member of the shadow cabinet, in favour of OMOV and electoral reform. Jack Straw risked the wrath of the left by proposing the abolition of Clause Four. They are in no sense Labour "traditionalists".

The propaganda battle is being waged with an intensity out of all proportion to the gaps separating people

In the party at large, the distinctions are also difficult to maintain. The Tribune Group, which has been the main focus of dissent, does not speak with one voice. There has been tension between Peter Hain and Tribune's chair, George Howarth. In the TUC conference issue of *Tribune* newspaper, Hain booked an advertisement bearing the fraternal greeting: "Keep the Trade Union Link." For the Labour conference issue, Howarth has changed the message to: "Keep the Link. Join the Labour Party."

Hain's latest pamphlet, *What's Left?* was published by *Tribune* newspaper, not the group. It did not stop members complaining, "What is he up to?" The pamphlet has a more traditionalist feel than might have been expected from Hain, with its invocations of "betrayal"; comparisons between modernisers and the SDP; and resentment at the convergence between Labour and Lib Dem policies.

The propaganda battle is being waged with an intensity out of all proportion to the real gaps separating people. Hain is not a Scargill or Benn. For their part, the modernisers are not Labour rightwingers. The problem is that, as people's positions become more entrenched, they are increasingly conforming to type.

This already began to happen during the Maastricht debate, when Hain's pro-federalist position got entangled with traditional little Englandism. The subtleties of voting against Maastricht because the EC was not yet democratic or federalist enough got lost.

The same process is already beginning to affect the debate on universal benefits. So long as the Social Justice Commission is sitting, it is possible to avert a full-scale row. But it is doubtful whether a truce can be maintained forever. The transport workers' leader, Bill Morris, who had argued in the *NSS* for a fresh look at universality, stood before delegates at the TUC conference and declared that principle sacred. It was also Morris who hosted a conference on Clinton economics, yet it is now *de rigueur* for trads to accuse the mods of taking Clintonisation too far.

The other great casualty of the present rows may be electoral reform. The TGWU's unexpected conference decision against it was a sign that it has become entangled in the trads versus mods split. It used to be a cause adopted by the open-minded, irrespective of left or right loyalties, but it is increasingly being tarred with the modernisers' brush (despite the fact that neither Brown nor Blair has pronounced on the subject).

There is one other sphere where old-fashioned Labourist attitudes are being reasserted. The constant sniping by the men at the women in the shadow cabinet is doing nothing for Labour's image. The women themselves are not a homogenous group, but whatever their political differences, they are being written off as a sex. There is no surer way of sustaining the gender gap and presenting Labour as the party of the past than jeering at the women who have made it to the top.

In the midst of these difficulties, can Labour succeed at defining itself? A group of young MPs (Anne Campbell, Malcolm Wicks, Nick Raynsford, Calum Macdonald and Tony Wright) have just published a pamphlet with the IPPR called *A New Agenda*. It reflects the yearning among the new intake at Westminster to break out of sterile party labels and synthesise Labour's message.

If the trads and mods have one over-riding aim in common, it is that they want the party to have a clearer sense of direction. But, to borrow Harold Wilson's image, the vehicle has stopped. It can only be started by the driver, John Smith.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Anton Kazlaucunas

Will many of the shadow cabinet survive the forthcoming election? **Paul Anderson** awards them end-of-term marks

Shadow reports

GORDON BROWN
The shadow chancellor's star has waned since he took over from John Smith last year, when he was widely talked of as potential leadership material. He is criticised for talking in predictable soundbites even by Labour MPs who agree with him, and there are plenty who don't (including several in the shadow cabinet). It's not for want of trying: no other Labour politician works longer or harder. But Brown is going to have to present far more convincingly his arguments for an economic policy based essentially on supply-side measures.
Votes gained in the 1992 shadow cabinet election: 165. Today's marks out of 10: 6

TONY BLAIR
The shadow home secretary, Labour's boy wonder and most outspoken "moderniser", doesn't have enemies only in the trade union movement: many of his MP colleagues reckon that his enthusiasm for one member, one vote is a simple matter of OMOV being the electoral method most likely to make him Labour leader after John Smith. Electoral reformers are disappointed that he has given them no support, and left-wingers attack him for embracing a Tory agenda on law and order or for being all presentation and no substance. But even his harshest critics have to admit that he is Labour's most effective television politician.
Votes last year: 150. Marks out of 10: 8

ROBIN COOK
Undoubtedly Labour's most consistently abrasive and coherent performer in parliament, Cook has made mincemeat of his opposite number at trade and industry, Michael Heseltine, as well as showing a grasp of detail and a capacity for innovative thinking (not just on his brief) unrivalled among his colleagues. There is still back-bench grumbling that Jack Cunningham and not Cook was made shadow foreign secretary last year, but if Cook gets another job, the main reason will be that he has consistently outshone Gordon Brown, who is supposed to be his senior.
Votes last year: 149. Marks out of 10: 9

FRANK DOBSON
Pugnacious, blunt and popular with colleagues, Dobson has done precisely what was expected of him in the dull job of employment spokesman, efficiently harrying the Tories over their miserable record on unemployment. Dobson is an effective media performer, but unexciting in the Commons. His opposite number, the smooth-talking former Welsh secretary David Hunt, is new to the job and could prove a more difficult parliamentary opponent than his predecesor, Gillian Shep-hard, who sometimes appeared to want to make Dobson's work easier for him.
Votes last year: 140. Marks out of 10: 6

JOHN PRESCOTT
Prescott's explosive assaults on the govern-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ment's appalling transport policies sometimes seem to have become a permanent feature of British politics. That's only partly because the angriest man in Westminster has been in his job so long (he was given it in 1988 as punishment for standing against Roy Hattersley for the deputy leadership): like him or loathe him (and he is loathed by those shadow cabinet comrades he contemptuously describes as "the beautiful people"), he has been extremely good at getting himself in front of television cameras and radio microphones.
Votes last year: 137. Marks out of 10: 8

HARRIET HARMAN
First elected to the shadow cabinet last year, Harman has so far failed to make much of an impact as shadow chief secretary to the treasury. This is partly because of Labour's understandable wariness about talking figures at this stage of the electoral cycle, but it also has something to do with her uneasiness in her job, which is apparent both in the Commons and on television, where she used to shine. The PLP's many sexists mutter about her having been promoted solely on the basis of her gender, but even her friends wonder why she wasn't given a social affairs or civil liberties portfolio.
Votes last year: 135. Marks out of 10: 6

MO MOWLAM
It remains a mystery why Mowlam, who made something of a splash as a junior member of Labour's treasury team in the run-up to last year's election, was not given an economic portfolio last year when she won a shadow cabinet seat for the first time. Instead, she became the spokeswoman on women, in which capacity she shadows no one, and on the government's Citizen's Charter. She has done her jobs perfectly competently without ever shining, leaving the unmistakable impression that she, too, feels that her talents would be better employed elsewhere.
Votes last year: 135. Marks out of 10: 6

CHRIS SMITH
Smith, a shadow cabinet newcomer last year after a distinguished spell as a junior member of the treasury team, has settled in well as spokesman on environmental protection, effectively number two (underneath Jack Straw) on the environment team. His firm grasp of detail has impressed colleagues as well as many in the environmentalist lobby, and he has managed to get himself a reasonable media profile despite the widespread feeling among hacks (shared, it has to be said, by several members of the shadow cabinet) that the environment is no longer a burning issue.
Votes last year: 135. Marks out of 10: 8

ANN CLWYD
Clwyd moved to her position as arts and heritage spokeswoman, traditionally a job that the Labour leadership does not take particularly seriously, only after Bryan Gould's resignation on the eve of last year's Labour Party conference. She has performed unspectacularly but competently in the Commons and has not had the highest of profiles in the media, but hardly anyone expects her to be moved: she is well-liked and no one else wants her job, except perhaps Tony Banks, and he has only the slimmest of chances of making it to the shadow cabinet.
Votes last year: 133. Marks out of 10: 5

ANN TAYLOR
Having made a reasonable job of her previous job at environment, Taylor, a former protégée of Roy Hattersley, has been a severe disappointment as education spokeswoman, never making much of an impact even though her opposite number, John Patten, has made a speciality of shooting himself in the foot. Her new education consultation documents have been greeted with howls of derision from the media, and although the rules about women in the shadow cabinet might save her, it would be no surprise if she lost her place this year.
Votes last year:129. Marks out of 10: 3

JACK CUNNINGHAM
The appointment of Jack Cunningham as shadow foreign secretary was greeted by groans all round last year and he has done nothing to suggest that the reaction was unfair. He is universally agreed to have performed miserably and has come in for particularly sharp criticism for taking a line on Bosnia that differs only in minor details from the government's. Despite spending most of the past year immersed in the minutiae of the Maastricht treaty, he has also failed to spell out Labour's vision of the future of Europe. Even left-wingers say that George Robertson would be better.
Votes last year: 124. Marks out of 10: 2

MICHAEL MEACHER
It is no secret that Meacher was given the overseas development spokesman's job last year as an attempt to remove him from the limelight—but he has surprised everyone with his high-profile approach, particularly on Bosnia, on which he has taken a much more interventionist position than Jack Cunningham (leading, according to shadow cabinet insiders, to some almighty rows). He has also shown verve and enthusiasm on issues closer to the core of his brief, visiting trouble spots throughout the world, and he has earned the respect of the development lobby.
Votes last year: 122. Marks out of 10: 8

DONALD DEWAR
The former shadow Scottish secretary has been charged with the delicate task of overseeing social security policy while, on one hand, Labour has contracted out its thinking on welfare to the Commission on Social Justice and, on the other, the Tories are planning severe cuts in welfare spending. A professional politician's politician also much admired by journalists, he has so far managed his brief without accident, but also without making it clear what he thinks himself about the direction policy should take.
Votes last year: 121. Marks out of 10: 6

DAVID BLUNKETT
In Robin Cook, Blunkett has had a difficult act to follow as Labour's health spokesman and his task has been made no easier by the growing confidence of Virginia Bottomley, to whom he has on occasion been just a little too nasty for some colleagues' comfort. Nevertheless, he has mastered his brief with skill and, with the future of the National Health Service still a political hot potato, he has had no problem retaining the high profile he achieved as Labour's local government spokesman in the run-up to last year's election.
Votes last year: 112. Marks out of 10: 7

JACK STRAW
Straw moved from education to environment last year, which some interpreted as punishment for failing to raise the profile of Labour's education policy during the election campaign, and early this year he was looking by far the most accident-prone member of the shadow cabinet after some inept kite-flying on compulsory competitive tendering. Now, however, he seems to be moving more carefully around the local government minefield and has established a small reputation as an intellectual after publishing a pamphlet on Clause Four.
Votes last year: 111. Marks out of 10: 6

TOM CLARKE
The most surprising addition to the shadow cabinet last year, Clarke has had a difficult time as shadow Scottish secretary coping with the often vicious internal disputes that have dogged the Labour Party in Scotland, particularly over the constitutional future of the country but also over water privatisation and other bread-and-butter issues. Despite a period off sick, a low London media profile and plenty of critics, his affable manner and softly, softly approach to dissent has at least kept all but the most pro-nationalist and anti-devolution wings of the party on board.
Votes last year: 105. Marks out of 10: 5

DAVID CLARK
It is often said that the role of Labour defence spokespersons is to keep as low a profile as possible, but Clark, pleasant and widely liked as he is, has overdone the invisibility. At a time when he should have been making a big fuss both about the failure of Nato to adapt to the end of the cold war and about the disastrous industrial impact of the government's defence-spending cuts, he has done everything in his power to stay off the television and radio. He just scraped into the shadow cabinet last year and now has his work cut out if he is not to lose his place this year.
Votes last year: 104. Marks out of 10: 4

RON DAVIES
Davies, who missed out the first time round, was elected to the top flight in a shadow cabinet by-election caused by Bryan Gould's resignation, so he has had rather less time to make an impact, as shadow Welsh secretary, than his colleagues. By most accounts, he has done a more-or-less reasonable job despite a low media profile—but he is likely to keep his portfolio regardless of how he performs. The only other Welsh MP in the shadow cabinet is Ann Clwyd, who doesn't want Wales, and, barring miracles, there is no other Welsh MP likely to be elected in the next couple of years.
Votes last year: 89. Marks out of 10: 5

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Dig.
Dig.
Dig.

As far as the eye is concerned, the Sellafield Repository would, if built, mean a few extra buildings and extra railway sidings alongside BNFL's works.

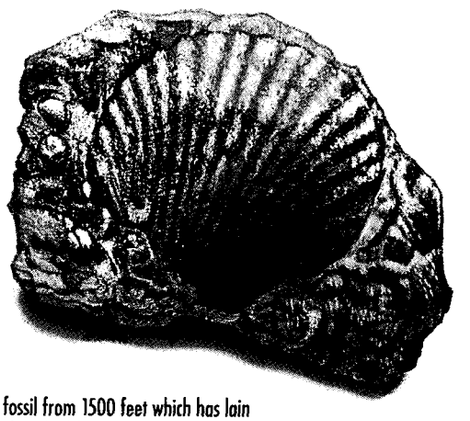
What the eye won't see, though, is the immense amount of expertise and care which will be in evidence underground.

A feat of engineering, the Sellafield Repository will be dedicated to the safe and permanent disposal of intermediate and low level radioactive waste.

WHY NOT ABOVE GROUND?

We're talking about a permanent solution to the waste disposal problem. And we're talking about thousands of years.

Above ground, the radioactive waste would always be someone else's problem. Generation



A fossil from 1500 feet which has lain undisturbed for millions of years.

after generation of people would have to monitor and maintain it. And in time they would almost certainly elect to dispose of it properly as we're proposing now.

WHERE IS THE WASTE GOING?

Burying radioactive waste puts the problem out of harm's way once and for all.

And when you consider <u>all</u> the facts and assess all eventualities, we hope you'll agree the safest place for radioactive waste is deep underground provided the conditions are right.

From an entrance at Sellafield, locomotive

Concrete excavated from the foundations of Hadrian's Wall shows how well similar materials can withstand the centuries.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

would take containers of radioactive waste on a five-mile journey to the underground Repository situated half a mile below ground.

The Repository will be surrounded on all sides by hundreds of metres of solid and stable "tuff" rock (like granite) and we aim to ensure

By mechanically thumping the earth and listening to the echoes we can see where the different rock strata lie.

the waste will remain below ground until it poses no safety threat.

Low-level waste, such as steel and rubble from the decommissioning of nuclear plants, will be packed into steel drums or boxes. Intermediate-level waste, such as metal cladding, sludges, plastics and rubber from the reprocessing of spent nuclear fuel, will be concreted into stainless steel drums or steel or concrete boxes.

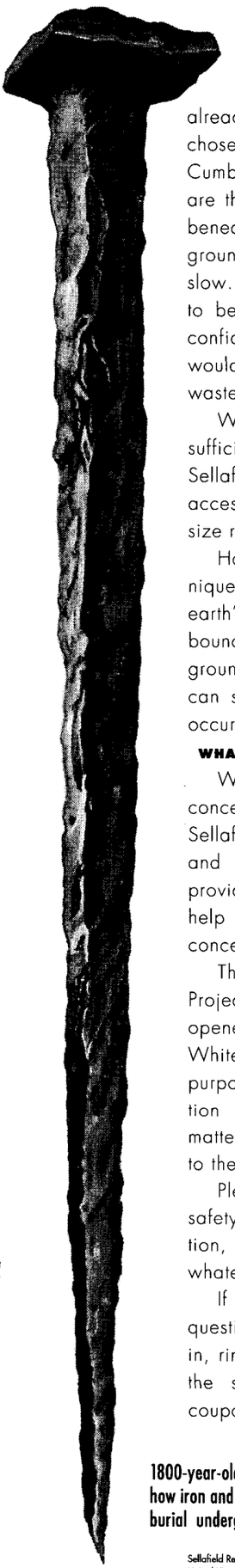
Why concrete? Because concrete and other cement-based materials are known to survive for

Safety below ground means safety above ground.

millennia. They were used in ancient China, Egypt and Greece. In fact, the condition of concrete recently excavated from the foundations of Hadrian's Wall shows how well it can withstand the centuries.

WHAT ABOUT UNDERGROUND WATER FLOW?

Water permeates even the most solid rock. And it is understanding the deep water flows at Sellafield which is our top priority.



1800-year-old Roman nail shows how iron and steel can withstand burial underground.

To examine the quantities and the movement of water at depth, we have already drilled at carefully chosen locations in West Cumbria, and the initial signs are that in the basement rock beneath the Sellafield area groundwater movement is very slow. But more work remains to be done until we can be confident of showing that it would be safe to emplace waste there.

We also know there is sufficient solid rock alongside Sellafield to house, and allow access to, a Repository of the size required.

How? Because by techniques such as measuring the earth's magnetic field, and bouncing echoes off underground rock structures, we can see where faults in rock occur and how to avoid them.

WHAT ELSE CAN WE TELL YOU?

We know there are concerns surrounding the Sellafield Repository Project and it is our hope that by providing the facts we can help allay some of these concerns.

The Sellafield Repository Project Information Centre has opened in Lowther Street, Whitehaven, with the sole purpose of providing information on request about any matter or issue which relates to the need for a Repository.

Please do talk to us about safety, waste disposal, disruption, environmental issues or whatever concerns you most.

If you have a specific question right now, then call in, ring us or write it down in the space provided in the coupon.

Sellafield Repository Project Information Unit is jointly staffed by United Kingdom Nirex Limited and British Nuclear Fuels plc.

If you have a question about any aspect of the Sellafield Project, please write it down in the space provided here and send it to: The Sellafield Repository Project Information Centre, Cumberland House, Lowther Street, Whitehaven CA28 7AH, or call us free on 0800 243 010.

Name					Postcode
Address					
My question is:					NS04

SELLAFIELD
REPOSITORY PROJECT
INFORMATION CENTRE

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The late Tony Crosland was a moderniser, but he would have been dismayed by Labour's current plans, writes **Anthony Arblaster**

The way we were

Reading, in recent weeks, about Labour's anxiety, or at least Gordon Brown's, to discard the party's traditional "tax-and-spend" image, while, at the same time, Tories like John Biffen were proposing income tax increases for the very rich, you might well feel like Alice in Wonderland. Who are the radicals in this scenario, and who provides the real opposition to the government's next round of public spending cuts?

Brown's assault on tax-and-spend was mere mimicry of America's Democrats. But why should a European party of the left be so keen to ape a transatlantic party that has never claimed or aspired to be a socialist party or even a social democratic one?

We must not wax nostalgic, but there was a time, less than 50 years ago, when a British Labour government had the self-confidence and commitment to set an example that other reformists and social democrats were eager to follow. Now they are content to trail after Bill Clinton and the centrist Democrats. It seems a pitiful decline.

This latest burst of "modernising" raises questions, not just about what Labour stands for, but also about its strategic grasp.

Let us, for a moment, give Brown and his friends the benefit of the doubt, and allow that they do still have some vestigial belief in Labour's traditional values—social justice, greater equality and protection for the most vulnerable sections of society.

The question still remains: how are these ideals to be realised? How does the Labour Party propose to begin reversing that growth in inequality and in both absolute and relative poverty that has been one of the great "achievements" of the Thatcher-Major years, and which has provoked so much comment recently, even in the Conservative press? How, if not by using the standard methods of what is now dismissively tagged as tax-and-spend?

Hard-nosed realists, ever alert for any whiff of socialist sentimentality, will no doubt suggest that it was ever thus. The left howls about betrayal while the leadership get on with the hard business of forcing the party to face up to reality and devise practicable policies. There never was a golden age when the party was led along the path to socialism by dedicated idealists and ideologues, they will relish telling us.

No, indeed, there was not. And there is no point in going in search of such a will-o'-the-wisp. But—and this is the point that the realists miss—there is no need to. To understand what has been lost by Labour, to grasp the extent of the confusion and aimlessness at the top of the party, there is no need to invoke the sacred names of the various lefts, whether they be Bevan and Benn, or Marx and Trotsky. There is no need to invoke Labour's achievements from 1945-51. We need look no further than the first theorist of postwar revisionism and one-time *bête noir* of the traditional left, the late Tony Crosland.

Tony Crosland may have been a revisionist, but he had a clear idea of what the Labour Party was for

Anyone remember him? Even *NSS* readers will need to be thirty-something or a bit more to have more than the haziest youthful recollections of the man who died in 1977 at the age of 58, after a mere ten months as Callaghan's chosen foreign secretary. Yet for 20 years before that, he had been one of the most important and influential figures in the Labour Party.

He it was who, in his major study, *The Future of Socialism* (1956), provided Gaitskell's revisionist project with its formidable theoretical and analytical foundation. Reflecting in many ways the "end of ideology" ethos that then prevailed in the US, he argued that much of the basic work needed to achieve socialism had been done. We were no longer living in a capitalist society. The state and the comparatively rational ethos of managerialism now dominated the economy, rather than the cut-throat quest for profit of the old robber barons. There was therefore no need for further major extensions of public ownership. The balance of power between capital and labour had been shifted irrevocably in favour of the latter. "The national shift to the left . . . may be accepted as permanent," he wrote.

He never lost sight of the fact that his strategy for equality involved high levels of public spending

So what was left for Labour to do? Crosland supplied a clear answer to this question. Unlike his one-time friend and ally Roy Jenkins, whom he thought had, by the 1970s, "come actually to dislike socialism" and was really "in the wrong party", Crosland always called himself a socialist, and had a firm idea of what that meant. Socialism was in essence "about equality". Britain, much more than some other developed societies, such as social democratic Sweden, was a grossly unequal and unjust society, still rotten with class distinctions and bloated privileges. Labour's task was to put this right.

This was to be done by a variety of methods, not the least vital of which was the promotion of comprehensive secondary schools—a task to which Crosland energetically devoted himself when he became education secretary in the mid-1960s. But, above all, what it required was the systematic redistribution of wealth and resources through the use of taxation to pay for steadily improving welfare provision —this to include health, education and housing as well as the cash benefits with which welfare is often narrowly identified.

Crosland was, at least in the 1950s, an optimist. He expected that much of this improvement and redistribution could be achieved relatively painlessly as the result of higher and sustained economic growth. This would obviate the otherwise tricky business of squeezing more taxes out of the rich.

As time wore on, the rosy prospect of steady growth faded. But Crosland never lost sight of the fact that his strategy for greater equality necessarily involved high levels of public spending. He was, as Susan Crosland wrote, "a man who believed high public expenditure was morally right".

It was, therefore, entirely consistent that, when the big crunch came for British social democracy in 1976, and a Labour government had to choose between its fundamental commitment to welfare and submission to the demands of the International Monetary Fund, Crosland was the most formidable cabinet opponent of blind capitulation. It was not that, in the end, he opposed capitulation as such; but he quite correctly warned against the idea that Labour should abandon its long-term and long-standing commitment to public spending—the key mechanism for achieving a more just and humane society through government action.

There is still, of course, room for argument about the adequacy of Crosland's conception of socialism. And the exaggeration of what Labour achieved between 1945 and 1951 has long been obvious. There was, alas, no "permanent national shift to the left". Had he lived, he would probably have done some pretty hard rethinking in the wilderness years after 1979.

But what is now plain is that Crosland, with all his limitations, was nevertheless a classic social democrat, or democratic socialist, as he would have preferred to say. Revisionist he may have been, but he had a clear idea of what the Labour Party is for, and also of the core strategy needed to promote the equality he passionately believed in. He was forever chiding his colleagues and leaders, from Gaitskell to Callaghan, for their lack of radical fire. He had a firm, lucid sense of direction, and he wanted to change society.

It is exactly that determination that made Tony Crosland so different from the flounderers who now lead the Labour Party, and that makes him seem so alarmingly subversive in today's climate of timidity and drift.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

POST OFFICE P.L.C?

Two out of three think prices would rise.

Three out of four think service quality would fall.

So, whose post is in jeopardy?

One of the many reasons why selling off the Post Office, either in parts or as a whole, is deeply unpopular with the British public, is that it is clear that it would benefit no-one except a handful of company directors and ministers on the boards of private courier firms.

The £50 billion debt created by continual mismanagement of the economy might have an imperceptible dent made in it by selling the Post Office, but at what cost? Communities which rely upon a highlyefficient, friendly, trustworthy and low cost postal service would lose an essential component. From the largest cities to the most isolated and rural villages, a postal service run purely for profit would have a detrimental effect on peoples lives.

That is why the public continue to demonstrate their total opposition to the prospect of a Post Office sell-off; and that is also why Ministers and politicians would be wise to heed the views of their constituents.

Our public postal services are second to none. Let's keep them that way. Stand by your Post.

Stand by your Post

THE POSTAL SERVICE WORKS FOR THE COMMUNITY

Supported by the postal unions. Figures from MORI poll released January 1993. Representative sample of 1,831 adults.

GMB FRINGE MEETINGS AT THE PARTY CONFERENCE 28,29&30 SEPTEMBER

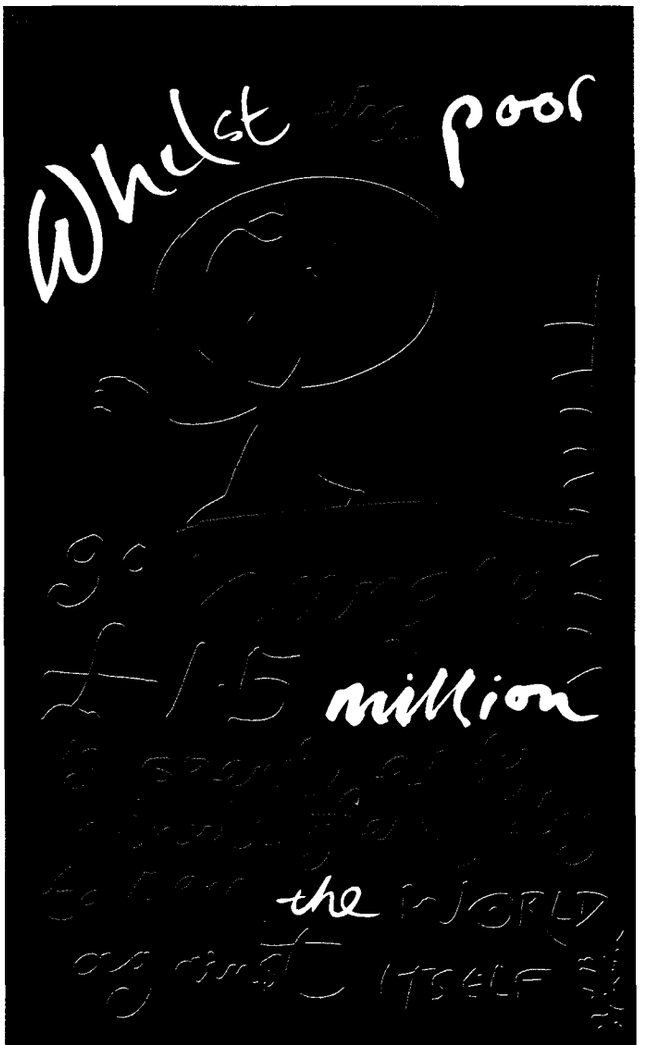
Tuesday lunchtime
Bringing in the
Social Chapter
the next step to winning European rights for working people. Skyline Restaurant, Brighton Conference Centre 12.30pm

Wednesday close of session
After Maxwell
waiting for Goode
will the long awaited report mark the end of pension fund abuse? Lounge 3, the Old Ship Hotel, Kings Road, Brighton 5.30pm

Thursday lunchtime
Will government deregulation of health and safety laws lead to the
Freedom to Kill?
Old Ship Hotel, the Buttery, 12.45pm

GMB working together

GMB – BRITAIN'S GENERAL UNION
General Secretary: John Edmonds



HUMAN RIGHTS BEGIN AT BREAKFAST

WAR ON WANT
CAMPAIGN AGAINST WORLD POVERTY

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Regular Alf Garnettesque monologues will soon be heard in a London council chamber. **Nyta Mann** reports on how democracy failed in Tower Hamlets

Does tomorrow belong to the BNP?

The east London borough of Tower Hamlets may have postponed the council meeting scheduled for last Monday, but the inevitable cannot be put off for long. The British National Party's Derek Beackon, armed with his democratic mandate from the people of Millwall, will soon be strutting into the council chamber to take his seat and deliver his maiden speech. No doubt it will be the first of many grotesque Alf Garnettesque monologues, intended to incite further intolerance towards the ethnic minority population, but specifically the Bangladeshis, across the borough. And Beackon's BNP colleagues—or, at any rate, those of them not currently imprisoned for violent disorder, assault, and similar offences—will be there to voice their raucous support from the public gallery.

It can only be wondered what uses and abuses Beackon will make of his constitutional rights as an elected councillor. His access to information held by the local authority on a multitude of subjects will, it can be assumed, be fully exercised. As his party's sole representative on the council, he will automatically find himself on every decision-making committee, dealing with matters from education and funding allocation, through to housing and social services. We can expect regular bulletins on the thoughts of Councillor Beackon to be issued through the town hall's press office facility, available to all council members.

There is also the real prospect of the council grinding to a halt. In the immediate wake of his by-election victory, other councillors have threatened not to attend any meeting at which Beackon is present. Last week's walk-out by council workers, the day after Beackon won his seat, was a spontaneous gesture of protest, insists local Unison branch secretary Derek Relph. The union has a 20 per cent black membership among local authority employees on the Isle of Dogs. While Relph does not envisage strike action, nobody is quite sure what will happen following Beackon's elevation from BNP "steward" to Tower Hamlets borough councillor. "Our members are not going to talk to Derek Beackon," he predicts. "As employees and officers of the council, we're in the position that we have to attend council meetings with him, and Beackon clearly can't be forbidden from attending himself. But there's plenty of scope for all of his mates to turn up, which is when we go out the door."

Precautionary measures have already brought bureaucratic gridlock a step nearer. All individual councillors requesting information from town hall staff must now do so in writing, and receive the general manager's approval that the requirement is a *bone fide* one, as opposed to something more sinister.

It seems, however, that there is no way of barring Beackon from doing his best to pursue the BNP's explicitly racist agenda through the local authority's offices. John Biggs, leader of the Labour group on Tower Hamlets' council, is one of many who has already sized up the available options. "There are four ways to get him off the council before the next election. One, he could die—that would be helpful, but it's unlikely. Two, he could resign. Again, that's unlikely. Three, he could be disqualified. We've looked into that, but it looks as if it won't happen. Finally, he would have to go if he receives a custodial sentence of six months or more. That hasn't happened yet, either."

So that leaves next May's local elections. Biggs is hopeful that vigorous local campaigning, especially on the pre-eminent issue of housing, between now and then will produce the right result. "We need to put our wares on the table very clearly. We have to make clear that the whole housing issue is a red herring, that the 'sons and daughters' letting policy does nothing more than whip up expectations with racism, and fails to deliver any of its promises anyway, for black *and* white residents."

He also believes that, if one good thing can eventually come from the election of Beackon, it is the end of the local Liberal Democrats' invidious game of playing one set of residents off against another. "In the long run, they will not be able to polarise the population using the issue of housing, as they did before. Housing and race are now clear issues here, and people will have to decide whether they want a borough riven with violence and dissent for years to come. When they are presented with that stark choice, I think they will make the right one."

Faith that those voters who cut out the Lib Dem middle man by choosing the BNP instead will see the error of their ways by next May, however, is by no means universal.

Simon Norfolk/Select

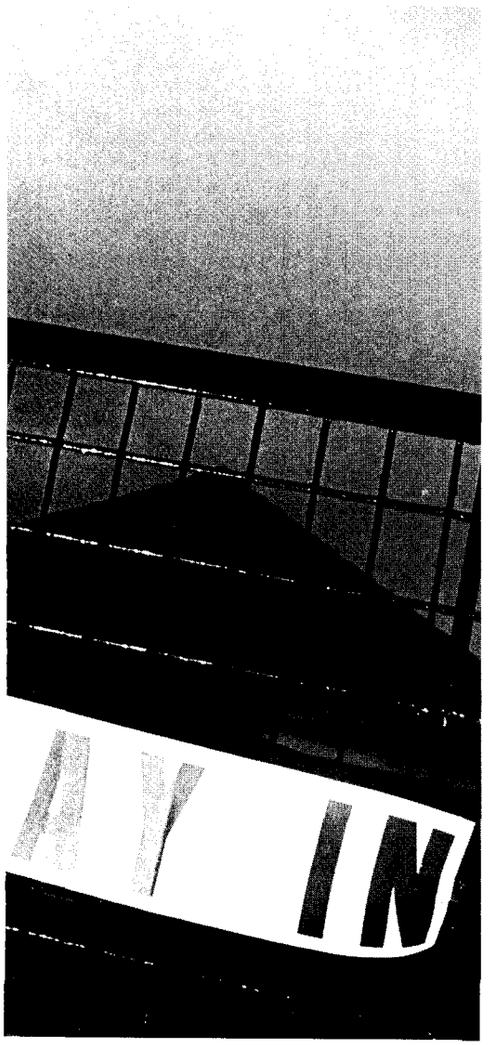
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Councillor Beackon prepares for power (below) while BNP supporters partake in full and frank discussions with anti-Nazi protestors during post-election clashes in London's Brick Lane (right)

Christopher Husbands, reader in sociology at the London School of Economics, has studied the far-right across Europe. In his opinion, Beackon is not the harbinger of a homegrown Le Pen figure; support for fascist parties in Europe is nationally dispersed, whereas in Britain it has always been a relatively isolated phenomenon, built up around antagonisms in urban, generally deprived, neighbourhoods.

But Husbands believes that while tomorrow may not quite belong to the BNP, the party is likely to consolidate its single council seat next year. "In the past, it has been other areas of east London that have been the prime sites of success for far-right parties—not Millwall. So if the BNP can get 33 per cent of the vote there, they should be able to pick up higher levels of support elsewhere next year. Assuming the bubble doesn't burst, which I don't think it will before May, they will get more seats."

Among Labour councillors and the local Bangladeshi population, as well as a great many white residents, the greatest anger is reserved for the ruling Liberal Democrats. The consensus holds that it is they, in the form of the self-styled "Liberal Focus" group, who have sown the seeds of the electoral harvest reaped by Britain's foremost neo-Nazi party; it is they who have delivered an already vulnerable black community into the hands of those whose stated intention is to drive them, by various means, from the area; and it is they who have compounded the elemental racism suffered by the black population in employment, policing, education, housing, and on the streets, with institutionalised racism such as the "sons and daughters" council house letting policy.



At an emergency public meeting called last weekend by the local Bangladeshi Welfare Association, with church leaders, Labour and Liberal Democrat politicians invited to attend and express their united condemnation of Beackon's electoral success, Peter Hughes, Lib Dem leader of the council, at one stage had to be shielded from furious local residents. When his turn came to speak, his words were drowned out by calls of outrage and frustration from the floor.

BNP supporters have already been on victory rampages in what is now, democratically, "their" manor

It is too late for him to offer words of comfort. Too much has happened since his party's dramatic rise from no seats in Labour-dominated Tower Hamlets in 1978, to overall control of the council in 1986. Noted lowlights of their reign include the eviction of 90 families in 1987 after the council declared them to be "intentionally homeless" on the grounds that they had emigrated to Britain, and the notorious 1990 election leaflet that masqueraded as a Labour newsletter promising to double rents, stop housing repairs, and give new immigrants preference in housing allocations.

Is the fall of one seat on one council to the BNP really all that serious? The answer is yes. Seventeen-year-old student Quddus Ali is still in hospital after being attacked by eight, perhaps nine, white youths as he walked along a main street of Stepney two weeks ago. For its viciousness, the attack on Ali made the news. Less reported are the run-of-the-mill bottlings in the face and Paki-bashings. Between now and the next local government elections, the threat of more racist attacks looms large. The Millwall result has granted political legitimacy to a party of racial violence, and lent credibility to the ordinary, average racist. As an organisation, the BNP is no different from its street presence; a collection of boot-boys and thugs, for most of whom the epithet "white trash" might well have been invented. Its strategy of targeting areas where racial violence is already rife, and then provoking further violence, has, for the time being, paid off. Its supporters have already indulged in victory rampages in and around the area that is now, democratically, "their" manor.

For the eastenders who are the targets of their attacks, local work *by* the locals is the only real answer. "Our priority is to mobilise the black community here," says Hossein Zahir, of the Newham Monitoring Project and Youth Connection, an alliance of 30 Bangladeshi youth organisations. "Anti-fascists from outside the area come in, do their anti-fascism, and then leave the area. They do a good job, but this thing can only be fought by a *community*-based anti-fascism. We've already started to establish an east London-wide strategy with all local groups to do that. We're going to challenge Beackon, legally and otherwise. We'll be there at his first council meeting."

There has been much handwringing and calls from Labour, the Liberal Democrats, and some Conservatives, for attention to be paid to the alienated, disenfranchised voters who turned to the BNP, in what have been labelled "the politics of despair". It must be remembered that, after last week, no one is more disenfranchised, alienated from the democratic process, and let down by the political establishment than the beleaguered Bangladeshi community of Millwall.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Portillo/Clarke: not the dream ticket

With the Conservatives sharpening their knives for another act of regicide, it is easy to forget the extent to which John Major was expected to bring unity to the party. The yellowing press cuttings from the day he became Prime Minister in the autumn of 1990 tell this poignant story. "All Friends Together" was the front-page headline of the *Daily Mail*, a once loyal paper that has just hired Major's number one enemy, Simon Heffer of the *Spectator*, to stick the boot into him regularly.

The friends pictured in the *Mail* were the chancellor of the exchequer, Norman Lamont, (*"He was the PM's campaign manager"*; the party chairman, Chris Patten (*"He supported Douglas Hurd"*); the home secretary, Kenneth Baker (*"As party chairman, his vote was never revealed"*; and the transport secretary, Malcolm Rifkind (*"He supported Hurd too"*).

Rifkind is the sole survivor around the cabinet table of this rogues' gallery. On the same front page of the *Mail* is a large photograph of yet another missing person from that era: Michael Heseltine, who is shown smiling and shaking Major's hand after being landed with the job of sorting out the poll tax. "No hard feelings" was the caption for that.

A likely story. All the same, Major may yet have to rely on the fading oratory of his old adversary to keep him in power. Heseltine is being mooted as a possible replacement for Sir Norman Fowler at Conservative Central Office, but his heart may not be up to all those rubber chicken dinners.

With Heseltine out of action, Major is entirely dependent on the Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, who has made no secret of his hopes of succeeding him (in due course). Michael Portillo is also flexing his muscles and trying to gain a reputation for "the vision thing".

Their professions of loyalty to the Prime Minister are doubtless sincere, for now. But, as all the accounts of the last days of Lady Thatcher make clear, power rapidly shifts from a wounded leader to his or her successor. Neither Major nor his rivals can put a stop to the brown-nosing going on. It is one of the natural instincts of all politicians. They are not interested in gaining favour with someone who is on the way out.

It is difficult to see how Major is going to get Tory backbenchers on his side again. All the tests he has been set by fellow politicians and the media are ones that he is virtually guaranteed to fail. It is no use, for instance, urging Major to make his speech at the Conservative Party conference a real humdinger. That is just not something he is capable of delivering.

Major is thinking of doing away with the dreaded autocue and speaking from the heart to the assembled Tory delegates. Addressing all those Union Jack-waving activists in a humble, folksy way when they are pining for the days of the imperious Maggie is a risky strategy. The tactic is said to have worked well at the Welsh conference a few months ago, but that was a generous interpretation of events. Journalists there say that he stuck rigidly to his prepared text, which he read out from the notes in front of him. In any case, the party was never that taken with his soapbox; it was the voters who liked it.

The European elections next June have also been described as make-or-break for Major, but here, too, it is impossible for him to perform well. At a meeting of Conservative Graduates at the ICA last weekend, Dr Julian Lewis, the old scourge of CND and demonologist of the left, explained the problem. He has been put in charge of targeting the Liberal Democrats in the research department of Conservative Central Office, but has found them infuriatingly difficult to pin down. It is not for want of trying—he has identified all sorts of dodgy Lib-Dem policies—but the voters are not bothered. It is enough for them, or will be in the European elections, that the Lib Dems are neither Labour, nor the government.

All the tests Major has been set by politicians and the media are ones that he is is virtually guaranteed to fail

Lastly, Major has been asked to show some vision. This is tantamount to demanding how long is a piece of string. While Portillo has been feted, notably by the *Sunday Express*, for setting out some wholly unoriginal thoughts about people's dependence on the state, Major's own pronouncements on the subject have been ignored or derided.

Immediately after the election, Major delivered a speech to the Adam Smith Institute, under the watchful but supportive eye of its director, Dr Madsen Pirie, who has recently been appointed a watchdog for the Citizen's Charter. It was called "The next phase of Conservatism: the privatisation of choice", and was supposed to stake out the Majorite intellectual high ground, while borrowing some of the slogans of the No Turning Back right.

The effort was predictably trite, but on Portillo's lips, it might have been hailed as a masterpiece. Portillo has always been identified as clever, while Major will never be forgiven his shortage of O levels.

Kenneth Clarke, like Portillo, was a student at Cambridge, but no one will ever praise him for his academic brilliance. His attributes are those of the politician's politician: he is bluff, good-humoured, shrewd and outspoken.

It is easy to see why Clarke and Portillo are being touted as the "dream ticket". But Labour's experience of such phenomena should be ample warning against it. The dream ticket is a way of describing two people who have nothing in common, such as Kinnock and Hattersley, who are meant to fuse the warring factions in their party together.

John Major was supposed to embody the dream ticket in one. He was a strange hybrid: a Thatcherite with a social conscience. In *The Major Enigma* by Penny Junor, Clarke describes how, "One of his skills is that everybody thinks he agrees with them . . . It's one of his most successful qualities—everyone is confident and convinced they have John as their ally."

It was too much to expect Major to keep this up. Sooner or later, he was going to offend somebody (maybe everybody). It will be no less difficult for Clarke and Portillo to hold the ring. Kinnock and Hattersley only just succeeded in controlling their party because Labour was in opposition and hungry for power. Plenty of Tory MPs would positively welcome a spell in opposition. It is only the fear of losing their seats that is holding them back.

This time last year, at the Conservative Party conference, Clarke was already being talked up by the Thatcherites as a potential successor to Major. He was the star speaker at the Conservative Way Forward fringe meeting and much admired by Norman Tebbit. He then blew it by confessing he had not read the Maastricht treaty. He is only back in their good books now that they have competely written off Major. He is not likely to hang on to their support for ever.

The hope that Portillo will be able to control him is fantasy. If there is one reason why the Thatcherites fear and respect Clarke, it is because they consider him to be his own man. If they thought he was their prisoner, they would torment him as much as Major. In any case, it would be as dangerous for Clarke as for Major to be so dependent on a rival.

On balance, the Tories may decide they had better stick by Major. But he will be a lame duck premier, comparable to an American president who is nearing retirement.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

SIDELINERS

To my dismay, my reactions to Gordon Brown parallel those of his ex-love for five years, Princess Margarita, daughter of ex-King Michael of Romania: "I never stopped loving him, but one day it didn't seem right any more. It was politics, politics, politics, and I needed nurturing."

For his first five years on the shadow cabinet, from 1987, I never stopped admiring him for his ability to hone armour-piercing phrases in the exchange of artillery between the two front benches. Admiration soared in 1988 when, in John Smith's absence with his heart attack, Brown trounced the egotistic Chancellor, Nigel Lawson, with his prophetic barb: "He is not paranoid; they really are out to get him!" In 1991, he scored with claiming the Tories were dependent on "a Greek billionaire moving his money out of Colonels and into Majors". This Tory-baiting skill won general admiration in the party. After April 1992's disappointing results, he came top in the shadow cabinet elections with 165 votes and was elected to Labour's NEC.

My disenchantment with Gordon Brown dates from John Smith's naming him shadow chancellor of the Exchequer in July 1992, after which he produced words, words, words, but little realism. He reminded me of the American psychiatrist's joke: "Neurotics build dream castles in the air, psychotics move in." Brown seemed even more mesmerised than others in the union and Labour leadership by the dream castles sketched out for them by Jacques Delors. Although both Neil Kinnock and John Smith discreetly urged the need to realign currencies within the ERM in June 1992, Brown fought a summer-long battle against even the mention by Labour of the word "devaluation", unequalled in his fervent defence of 2.95 Deutschmarks to the pound by anyone except John Major.

Brown's "dream castle" approach continued in the debate over Maastricht and the Social Chapter, helping to give the impression that Labour's front bench was looking at the EC and Brussels through the same rose-coloured spectacles as the Tories' pro-EC middle-class idealists, like Hugh Dykes.

Brown's impression of having both feet firmly planted in mid-air has been strengthened recently by his enthusiasm for the ideas of Harvard's Robert Reich, now Clinton's Labour Secretary: that the long-term prosperity of a country depends on its labour skills. He has even been quoted recently as claiming that such knowledge is more important than capital. This may be true in Silicon Valley, but not anywhere else in the industrial world. The complaint that this obsession has "unilaterally disarmed" Labour's economic thinking has been voiced openly by MPs Peter Hain and Dr Roger Berry. But his frontbench colleagues, disciplined into silence, also mutter. "How on earth do I tell my unemployed scientists, engineers and computer planners, that all we need is to train more people in their unused skills, without saying how and where we are going to find them jobs!" complained one.

Andrew Roth

EDWARD PEARCE

Educated, rational and bland as shepherd's pie, the Lib Dems are lucky to have a leader with a touch of spice

"We don't want to be a nice middle-class party," said the lady delegate at Torquay. Well, sorry love, but you sort of are one, however hard you try. And it is being a nice middle-class party that has won the Lib Dems the votes of splitting, defecting and variously fed-up Tory voters, and has thrust chairmen's gavels into its hands from Brightlingsea to Bodmin. The people meeting in Torquay are temperamentally different from the Tories, but if they differ socially, they do so on terms of advantage.

The report of the University of Strathclyde politics department, a proper statistical survey with questionnaires circulated to a market-relevant sample of Lib Dem activists, fell upon the conference on Sunday night in a lecture from its witty and impressive chairman, John Curtice. Mr Curtice, whose receding Strewelpeter look suggests that he may also have won the Chopin piano competition, announced stunning facts. The Lib Dems, with graduates making up 43 per cent of their members, are the most educated party, and the Conservatives, fewer than one in five of whom have seen the inside of a university, are the least educated.

The relationship between Ashdown and his party is a love affair between chrysanthemums and an orchid

There is more, much more—not least about the naughty willingness of activists to do working deals with Labour, and a useful warning that, issue by issue, activists run rather to the left of their voters and further still beyond their target voters.

Of course it is *not* stunning; if we hadn't guessed all this, we should have. But the Strathclyde report is authentication by the gloppiter-gloppiter machine of statistical analysis of wet-thumb, crafty assumption. It is now almost as true as if you had seen it on television.

So the people discussing agriculture, race relations, consumerism and the Portsmouth bus service on Monday must be looked at as the best-educated, and most competent party; indeed, as the alternative middle class. On the whole, they sounded like it. Absent on Monday were the affirmationist hallelujahs that have made Labour conferences such a strain so often. As absent was that creepy hand-clasping sycophancy—now, of course, shot through with *Garagiste* toxins—that make Conservative conferences so undescribably awful. Very significantly, there are no plaudits here for exhibitionists. Wave a pair of handcuffs at this lot, or drop 60 feet of computer print-out off the platform, and the delegates will look at one another in embarrassment.

Their approach—on sheepmeat regimes, as on rip-off local buses—is rationality itself: how it is done, why it is wrong, some thoughts towards putting it right. It is a combination of the non-conformist sense of wrong and the steady academic's notion of method—not exciting, but wonderfully wholesome.

The only real show-off here is the party leader. Paddy Ashdown, observing that not being thought of as a politician is a card that ought to be played, is a nice chap. He is very good for this too-serious, too studiously pallid party—a scarlet sash on a dun-brown coat. But he is split in himself between cool-eyed realism and a desire to invade Zambia tomorrow. He is like Raina in Shaw's *Arms and the Man*. Raina discovered that her mother could do nothing with her once she adopted a thrilling tone to her voice. Mr Ashdown is thrilling, all right, and romantic and, in a slightly barbered way, wild. He loves rhetoric, sonority, projection; his is hair intended by providence to be ever pushed handsomely out of his eyes. Let him loose and he would do you a 40-minute peroration.

All this captivates the Lib Dems, who sense in the ever decent and good Alan Beith someone too like themselves. This relationship between party and leader is a love affair between chrysanthemums and an orchid, between shepherd's pie and paprika; it is the mutual conflagration of opposites. But it wants watching.

A horrible spectre of anti-climax stalks Captain Ashdown in all his gallant impulses to save the world and win Somerton and Frome. It is the spectre of "on and on and on, and up and up and up"—the mithering nothings of Ramsay MacDonald run out of everything except rhetoric. But that is a long-distance warning; and astute men with spanners, like Richard Holme, stand by to avert it. And anyway, this is a shepherd's pie so nourishing that no paprika will spoil it.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In a Californian pool, **Laurie Taylor** encounters the pleasing possibility that we might at any time revert to a past identity

Paradox at play

Holidays are times for big decisions. At midday on Thursday of my second week in California, I sat up straight on my poolside lounger and decided to abandon the new blockbuster novel by Theodore Roszak, which was proving as unreasonably apocalyptic about the nineties as *The Making of a Counter-Culture* had been about the sixties, and instead to devote myself to an extended programme of physical fitness. I reckoned I'd be able to manage at least 50 lengths a day if only a few of the present guests tightened up on their lane discipline. Rich Californians seemed to swim with exactly the same lack of precise purpose with which they walked and talked; as though they had stress monitors bolted inside their skulls that buzzed whenever they displayed a degree of animation that elsewhere in the world might mark them out as properly human. (Perhaps they all know that if they wait around long enough they'll have their every wish attended to by a posse of illegal Mexican immigrants.)

Once the pool was clear, I could show the gilded crowd around the edge with their Diet Sprites exactly how to execute the crawl: none of that half-hearted dog-paddling that passed for swimming here, but the sheer white-skinned, head-down, straightforward power that came from years of early-morning practice at York's Rowntree Baths (the only baths in the world where the smell of chlorine is tempered by the odour of fruit pastilles and after-dinner mints).

Meanwhile, in the present pool, an encounter group was forming. A fat man with a patchy hair transplant had crossed lanes and struck up conversation with an even fatter man with enough hair on his back to knit a shawl. It turned out they knew each other. By an extraordinary coincidence both worked in the communications industry (somehow one just guessed they weren't piecework orange pickers). And—talk about small worlds—they were both from LA. That sounded like enough coincidences for one Carmel Valley hotel swimming pool, but just as I was about to make my move, hair transplant suddenly said without a trace of shame or self-consciousness, "Hey, I've been a sober alcoholic for the last five years." "Hey, so have I," said hairyback, absolutely beside himself with delight at having bumped into a fellow paradox.

It was quite enough to send them off to the adjoining Jacuzzi for a leisurely celebration of the fact that they were both rich and daft and all-in-all Californian enough to define themselves publicly, not just in terms of their past failings—"Hey, I used to be helpless drunk"—but according to the slick terminology dispensed by their personal counsellors.

Ros Asquith

It was only days later, when I'd abandoned fitness for ornithology, and was watching the prehistoric pelicans demeaning themselves by begging lumps of sour-dough sandwich from the tourists on Santa Barbara pier, that I began to think I might have been too quick to dismiss the "sober alcoholics". Even though the concept itself had no relevance to me—if anything I suppose I'd have to call myself an alcoholic alcoholic—there was, I had to admit, a peculiar appeal about a phrase that so explicitly captured the possibility that we could at any moment revert to a past identity; that so undermined the contemporary myth of constant self-renewal.

I could, without too much effort, imagine myself rearing up like a Port Lobos sea lion at the shallow end of a Californian pool, and announcing to the nearest lounger, "Hey, I'm an atheist Catholic. Been one for the last 32 years." Then it would be straight over to the Jacuzzi with my fellow paradoxicals for desperately whispered conversations about the time when we came across ourselves lighting candles to the Virgin in a darkened corner of an Italian church; the occasions when we had sat seething while some two-bit alternative comedian derided the spirituality of Mother Teresa; the intermittent but overwhelming urge to disappear into a little darkened room and tell the profiled face behind the metal grille about our long history of derelictions, both mortal and venial. ("Bless me, father, for I have sinned. It is four decades since my last confession.")

And as the warm water gurgled round my midriff, perhaps I'd be joined by some other fellow spirits, by some non dope-smoking dope smokers, by a small selection of that multitude who, even as they raise a wine glass to their lips, find themselves knowing with a fearful intensity that they could so readily go back to the time when life revolved not around the latest Oddbins Special, but the rituals of the three-Rizla cigarettes and the Bacofoil pellet of industrial Lebanese; back to the time before Howard Becker made us all smart-ass relativists with his essay on marijuana use and people smoked, not in order to have a good giggle about being unable to remember the end of their present sentence or provide a handy excuse for gobbling through a bucket of Haägen-Dazs chocolate chip, but because they relished the heightening of emotion and sensitivity that the drug induced.

I imagine that I could find a Jacuzzi large enough to accommodate most of the atheist-Catholic non-smoking dopesters of my acquaintance, but I fear I'd be forced to commandeer a bath-house to find enough room for that most ubiquitous of contemporary paradoxicals—the faithful libertine. Even so, there'd still be far too many people talking at the same time about how their current fidelity was constantly shot through with obsessive memories of early mornings stumbling through strange streets, the delights of devising five separate but equally convincing Valentines, and the ever-present but delicious fear of muttering, "Oh David, darling", as they happily climaxed once again with Richard.

It's nice to know that the concept might even extend to more literary areas. Only two days after returning from California, I ran into Terry, an old friend from Liverpool whose name I'd spotted among the current list of contributors to the *New Statesman & Society* Defence Fund. "I didn't know you were a reader," I said. He explained that he'd read the *NSS* religiously in the past, couldn't get through the week without his fix of Arthur Marshall and the competition and This England and the back pages. But then he'd moved on reluctantly to the *Listener* and when that closed had gone on with even less enthusiasm to the *Spectator*. "So now you're back with the *New Statesman*?" "Not exactly," he explained. "I take it regularly, but so far I haven't started reading it."

Welcome to the jacuzzi, Terry.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LETTERS

NSS columnist John Pilger is currently away filming in East Timor (his column returns on 8 October)—a place that the East Timorese describe as "the world's biggest concentration camp". As Rowena Lennox, of London SW9, writes this week, in response to Ani King Underwood's "Letter From East Timor" (NSS, 3 September), the oppressive Indonesian occupation "permeates every aspect of life and death" there.

Lennox goes on: "Xanana Gusmao, leader of the resistance in East Timor, was captured last November and sentenced to life imprisonment (later reduced to 20 years) in May. He was prohibited from reading his statement at his trial in Dili and has not been seen by independent observers since he was transferred to a prison in Semarang, Central Java, in August. Despite requests, delegates from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) have not been permitted to visit him. He was illegally tried, illegally transferred and there are persistent reports that his health is poor.

"Xanana's story is just one of the many hundreds of stories of people who are regularly intimidated, interrogated, maimed and murdered in East Timor. In the last few weeks, 53 students were detained days prior to a visit from US Congressional staff members to the region on 1 September. Indonesian armed forces said the youths were 'receiving guidance and training in national awareness'.

"ICRC delegates, allowed into East Timor after international pressure in 1979, have not been able to visit a single political detainee in the region since January. In May, the ICRC's chief delegate in Jakarta, Pierre Pont, issued a blunt and angry statement announcing the committee's decision to suspend all prison visits in the territory because 'the necessary conditions for Red Cross visits had not been met'."

Coincidentally, as Lennox points out in relation to Nyta Mann's article on the British arms fair ("Lethal shop of horrors", 10 September), Britain is one of the four main suppliers of weapons systems to Indonesia. In June, British Aerospace sold 24 Hawk fighter/trainers to Indonesia. Britain also quadrupled its aid to Indonesia in 1993. We ought to be hearing much more about this in Britain—and will be, in these pages at least, when John Pilger returns.

T J Davies, of Cardiff, also wrote in response to Nyta Mann's article. He says it reminded him of "many such articles [dealing with] the specifically 'Iraqgate' aspect of such matters, and with the fact that arms sold to Saddam's Iraq were, or might have been, used against British soldiers."

Davies comments: "There is, however, nothing new about the sale of British arms to countries that have thereafter used them against British forces, either in general terms or in the case of Iraq in particular." He gives a number of examples.

"In 1941, when the anti-British Rashid Ali government came to power in Baghdad, British arms, including Hawker and Gloster aircraft, were used to try to dislodge British forces from Iraq. In 1948, at least one RAF unit (flying Supermarine Spitfires) lost both lives and aircraft when attacked first by the Egyptian air force (flying Supermarine Spitfires) and then by the Israeli air force (flying Supermarine Spitfires) as a result of presence in Palestine and Egypt during the Arab-Zionist struggle. (An interesting aside is that the only worthwhile air-to-air resistance put up to the Israelis during the Six Day War came from the Iraqis, flying Hawker Hunters.)" And, of course, rather more recently, the Argentine air force used British-built and supplied Canberra bombers against the Falklands task force.

"This is not an exhaustive list," says Davies. "'Iraqgate' is neither new nor unique except in detail. Given the fundamentally amoral nature of arms trading the world over, and not just in or from Britain, similar episodes will continue to occur. The only thing that surprises me is that some people are still capable of being shocked by them."

Steve Platt

Party prejudice

One of the most frequently used tactics in local authority by-elections is to circulate rumours that the council favours black people in the allocation of housing. In Lambeth, that tactic has been used again and again in recent by-elections, although no one has yet been caught in the act. Tragically, in Tower Hamlets this tactic, and other slurs, has helped to elect the first fascist councillor for more than a decade.

Why should people suffering racial prejudice listen to a political party that harbours racists? There may have been fascist or racist members of my local Labour Party, but when we find them we expel them—and we don't need any help from well-known lawyers to do so. Unlike Labour, however, the Liberal Democrats in London appear to use racist tactics almost as a matter of course. In by-election after by-election, they raise issues that they are reluctant to deal with in open committee meetings. The general consensus is that they have consistently exploited racism for their political advantage.

South of the river, racists have not yet been as successful as in Millwall. One of the reasons for this is that we try to confront racist rumours when we find them. Every working councillor in Lambeth knows that there are stories of racist black housing officers; on the rare occasions that it is possible to investigate the allegations, I have always found such stories to be totally false. If racist housing allocations are discovered, they are acted upon and staff have been sacked for such offences. Despite this, it seems that our political opponents in Lambeth are not prepared to back us in this work. If they wanted to defeat racism they would not circulate leaflets similar to those distributed by the Tower Hamlets Liberal Democrats. Instead, they know that appealing for "local people" to be in charge of housing allocations policy can be sold on the doorstep as keeping the blacks out.

Of course Lambeth people should determine housing allocations policy, but it has to be done on a borough-wide basis. Of course the council should try to keep families together, but we are operating with an ever-decreasing housing stock. Of course we know housing is not the real motive of many of those who raise these issues.

One essential and immediate step that Home Secretary Michael Howard could take is to announce that he is banning the BNP from marching anywhere in London. He and his Conservative colleagues need also to examine their own record, and we should also recognise that the British media have some responsibility for the recent rise of British fascism. These arguments, however, can not excuse the neglect of professional politicians such as Paddy Ashdown. He calls for Labour to cooperate with him to tackle the rise in fascism, even though he has consistently failed to tackle the racists within his own party. He seems to be claiming that he didn't know about the serious allegations concerning members of his own party until 17 September 1993, the day after the BNP's candidate was elected councillor for Millwall. Either he is one of the most misinformed politicians this country has ever seen, or he is not telling the whole truth. In the meantime, the real debate on racism will continue in pubs, round the kitchen table, in the bus queue, and at the local housing office. It is there that the fight will be won or lost.

Councillor Josh Arnold-Forster
Lambeth Town Hall
London SW2

The modern way

Both your editorial ("Labour's electoral quandary", 17 September) and the article by Peter Hain MP ("Mods and mockers", 17 September) make some valid points. Labour must, of course, establish a bold—radical, even—identity, both to persuade its own members that the cause is worth fighting for, and to attract the support of those who are sceptical of the ability of politicians to *do* anything.

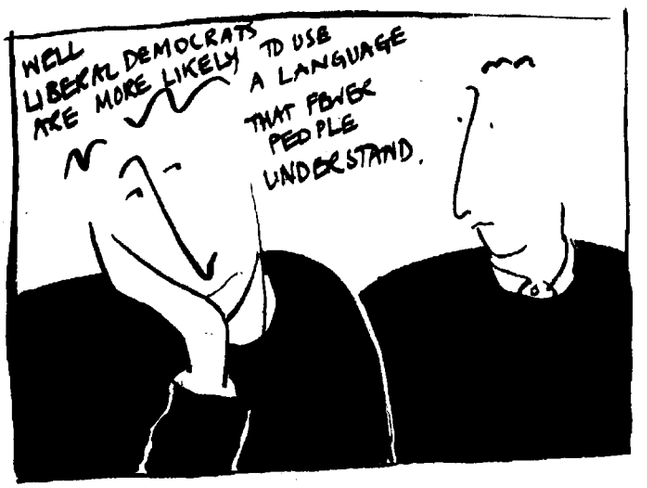
But I am puzzled by Peter Hain's attempt to paint himself as the voice of that radical identity, and to portray those such as Giles Radice MP and myself, the authors of the Fabian pamphlet *More Southern Discomfort*, who argue that the party should pay still more attention to the concerns of the C1s and C2s, as something less. The "new emerging Labour left," writes

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Hain, ". . . recognises that the class system has been restructured . . . It accepts that the old communities of male-dominated heavy industry have . . . shrunk. It accepts that the party had to update its appeal . . . It agrees that the operation of the union block vote needed reforming and that the involvement of individual members in party decision-making is desirable. It rejects the statist tradition."

Well, yes. Perhaps I am missing something, but I am trying to work out what the difference is between that and the views of the "modernisers". I am, incidentally, rather proud that the main jibe against our pamphlet is that we are "modern". I had always assumed that socialism looked forward to the future, but maybe I am wrong and the party should campaign as backward-looking and proud of it?

The view contained in your editorial, however, that "the unions' role in Labour politics became a major issue in the past 18 months only after the trade union leaders clumsily bounced John Smith into the leadership", is simply dotty. It is an original, if slightly strange, thesis that the relationship between the unions



and the party was not a "major issue" during the *In Place of Strife* period, the 1974 elections, the social contract, the "winter of discontent", the 1979 election, and the 1984/85 miners' strike. Still, we are all entitled to our own view of history.

The message of our pamphlet is straightforward. If we are ever to win again, we need the support of C1s and C2s, who comprise 55 per cent of the electorate, just as we need to win seats in the south, where we now hold just 45 out of 261 seats—including London. To do this, we need to understand the way people think.

Stephen Pollard
London W2

Sporting spotlight

While I hold no brief for Juan Samaranch ("Eyes on the Prize", 17 September), on the political effect of the Seoul Olympics, his reported opinions seem to me correct. In fact, I'd go further. Not only did the 1988 Olympics bring to Seoul teams from China, the USSR and eastern European countries—none of which at that point recognised South Korea—but the prospect of the global spotlight falling on Seoul was an important weapon for democrats there, and helped force the dictatorship to make crucial concessions in June 1987.

In those two senses, ironic as it may be, the Seoul Olympics did their bit for peace and democracy in and around Korea. It seems to me by no means impossible that in China, too, this will give pro-democracy activists a vital forum to embarrass their rulers into concessions—and a seven-year run-up in which to plan the strategy. In such ways can even the corrupt do good, despite themselves. That kind of dialectic, so normal in history, is missing from Andrew Jennings' one-dimensional diatribe. Marx and Mao knew better about history's twists and turns.

Aidan Foster-Carter
Director, Korea Project
Leeds University

A claim too far

I notice that Paddy Ashdown claims that the Liberal Democrats have overtaken Labour ("Soldiering on", 17 September). I wonder where he gets the evidence for this claim.

If he is referring to the general election results of last year, a look at those results show the Liberal Democrats to have polled only around half the votes cast for Labour in the same election. As for his claim that they have replaced Labour in the seats where the Tories need to be beaten, a look at the swings required for the respective parties to win a House of Commons majority show Labour requiring between 4 and 5 per cent, with the Lib Dems requiring a swing many times larger.

I would imagine, however, that he would have more likely been referring to the English and Welsh county election results of this year. But even in these it was Labour who came out best, as the SLD were behind both them and the Tories in terms of votes cast and seats won, despite the media hype that gave a different impression. Even in the south, Labour did comparatively well, becoming the largest single party on Essex, Suffolk, Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire county councils. Such claims from Ashdown give the impression of the Liberal Democrats being not so much a party of integrity, but more an opportunistic party that takes advantage of myths and media hype.

Iain Archibald
Polmont
Falkirk

Lord of all we survey

I have read Roy Greenslade's article on Rupert Murdoch ("Sky's not the limit", 10 September), and was thinking of including some succinct comments about the Warlord of Oz in my letter. However, I have just remembered that I am also thinking of entering journalism upon leaving college, by which time he will be paying my wages, your wages, and everybody else's.

Tom Farrell
Dublin
Ireland

Tell-tale signs

Maybe, as a member of the Liberal Democrat policy committee, I have an unfair advantage, but I have to report that I had little difficulty in spotting most of the differences between Labour and Liberal Democrat policy statements in your quiz ("Spot the difference", 17 September).

In fact, there are some simple techniques for improving your chances of telling the two parties apart. Here are a few of them: 1) Other Languages. The use of non-English words or phrases makes it much more likely that the statement is from the Liberal Democrats (for example, Welsh *Senedd*, *laissez-faire*). 2) Buzz words. The two parties have different catch-phrases or hooray words. Liberal Democrats have "individual", "democracy", "local" and "environmentally sustainable". Labour has "industrial" and "comprehensive" (new Labour Partyspeak for what used to be called "planned"). 3) "Community". Labour documents often use "community" as a synonym for "state" or "government" (Gordon Brown, despite his denials, does this as much as anyone else). Liberal Democrat documents use the word "community" to mean something like "people who live

Min Cooper

THIS SCOTLAND

£5 for all entries printed below. Entries on a POSTCARD please

• Scotland's premier duke today escaped a jail sentence.

The Duke of Hamilton admitted his fifth drink-driving offence, dangerous driving—and police assault.

The 54-year-old duke, brother of Scottish Office minister Lord James Douglas-Hamilton, was put on probation for a year, given 200 hours community service, and banned from driving for eight years.

Sheriff John Dean told the duke at Haddington Sheriff Court: "It is plain that you are making every effort to stay away from drink."—*Glasgow Evening Times* (Patrick Butler)

• Lothian Regional Transport says it will not carry advertisements from the Edinburgh Gay Switchboard unless all gay and lesbian references are removed.—*Times* (Derek Morgan)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

locally". 4) Style. Liberal Democrat policy documents have lots of specific bullet points, because the party is sensitive to the old accusation that it has no policy. Labour, in contrast, loves generalities, because it is sensitive to the new accusation that it has no philosophy.

I hope *NSS* readers find these tips helpful in future quizzes.

David Howarth
Cambridge

Brighton mock

Readers of last week's *NSS* may have been a little confused after reading the profile of Joyce Gould (Influences, 17 September). Could this self-proclaimed "idealist" have any connection with the Joyce Gould who was responsible for the expulsion of Labour Party members who stuck to socialist principles? And could "We must obtain a mandate from the majority of the people" be such an important principle to someone who ignored the majority of the evidence given to her Brighton Labour Party investigation, as well as a 300-signature petition and general committee resolutions, in order to engineer those expulsions?

Anyone whose only knowledge of Joyce Gould comes from reading her *NSS* questionnaire would do well to read *Comrades and Friends*, a pamphlet produced by some of her victims in Brighton. A first-hand account of the Brighton witch-hunt will be available next week during the party conference.

Jim Grozier
Brighton
East Sussex

Curses curbed

I am grateful to you for publishing my letter (Letters, 17 September). However, I did not write that "someone else's violence" should be "cursed"! What I said was *curbed* through punishment—elimination, or part-elimination, being the only way in which to deal with original sin.

There are three phases of violence, namely genocidal, structural, and, as violence increasingly turns in upon itself (see Nietzsche's *Genealogy of Morals*), suicidal, with the criminal justice system leading the way.

The vicious circle (suicide again) can become a virtuous one, but only if we are prepared to accept that a learned response can be unlearned. Only, in short, if we are able to replace *punitive* justice with *restorative* justice. Writing about suicidal violence, Nietzsche (*op cit*) said it all: "When man, this monster of destruction, of *self-destruction* wounds himself, it is that very wound that forces him to live."

Drummond Hunter
Director
The Howard League (Scotland)

Willow branch

At a meeting of the London HQ Branch of the Society of Telecom Executives on 20 September, the following resolution was unanimously approved:
1) The branch congratulates Brother Platt on his Stakhanovite innings on Saturday last to defeat the revisionists of Huntingdon Labour.
2) It calls on Mr Major to appoint Mr Platt convener of the English cricket tour of the West Indies.
3) It resolves that Messrs Gower and Dexter should be appointed to edit *NSS* in his absence.
4) It demands that the next sporting event organised by *NSS* should be a conker championship with the editorial board of the *Militant*.

London Headquarters Branch,
Society of Telecom Executives
London SE1

Molehunt

Is something funny going on? Should we now be calling you *NINSS*?

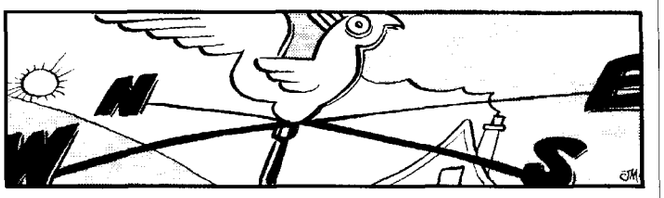
The very week that the *Times* cut its cover price by a third in its attempt to destroy some real newspapers, you carry an advertisement for the very same paper on the back cover (*NSS*, 3 September).

The next week, Murdoch is on the front cover (*NSS*, 10 September). Has he bought shares yet?

I therefore must suggest that there might be a Murdoch mole in your advertising department. That is, if he hasn't already purchased *NSS*.

David McGrath
Cumbernauld

FRINGE BENEFITS



Colin Ward gathers evidence on a social history walk

In the 1960s and 1970s, Victor Skipp, who ran local history research classes for the Extramural Department of Birmingham University, followed the precepts of W G Hoskins, and took his students on trips to read landscapes as closely as they read books. A favoured site was Josiah Wedgwood's Etruria Works, built in the 1760s, and *the* decisive event in the history of the Potteries area.

"I shall never forget," he says, "coming along the canal towpath in April 1969 with a party of 40 students behind me, only to discover that the main object of our visit had disappeared." His first misfortune was to be into industrial history before it was sanctified as Heritage. His second was his failure to anticipate what he calls the city of Stoke-on-Trent's "most senseless and wanton misfortune", and consequently to make a reconnoitre of the route a week before, just to see if history was still there.

Andrew Dobraszczyc takes care not to be frustrated that way. He is famous for his social history walks in the Potteries, run by West Mercia Workers' Educational Association, but does a trial trip on each route, however well-trodden, to be sure that it hasn't become inaccessible through road works and to warn residents who, in turn, ask if they can join, or invite participants into their own backyards.

I'd been impressed by last year's programme of 40 chances to learn *in situ*. As it was 150 years since the Chartist riots of 1842, Bob Fyson had piloted students round the locations of events in Hanley, Burslem, Longton and Tunstall, preceded by a re-enactment in the Town Hall of the trials of the rioters. And as it was the 60th anniversary of the Kinder Scout Mass Trespass of 1932, Don Lee, who has campaigned with about 300 separate appearances at public inquiries or in court in the effort to save footpaths, ran two residential courses, with walks attached, at the Wedgwood Memorial College, one to examine how effective the right-to-roam lobby had been, in the face of apathy, hostility and official indifference. The myths and realities of the Kinder Scout trespass is, incidentally, discussed—together with the new wave of threats to public access to open space—in a highly relevant new book by a lifelong rambler, Harold Sculthorpe (*Freedom to Roam*, Freedom Press, £3.50).

But it was my interest in the history of squatter settlements that made me join Andrew Dobraszczyc's walk around Baddeley Edge the other Sunday. I simply turned up outside the pub, paid my £1 fee (the half-price for students, senior citizens and unemployed) and gratefully paid another £1 for the carefully prepared old map extracts and census returns. Some of my fellow walkers were well-prepared, having attended a half-day school presenting the new evidence gathered by a two-year class from Keele University adult education department. Others lived there, in gentrified houses of humble origins, and wanted to know what they had inherited.

At every point, Andrew brought the layers of evolution of this haphazard landscape to life: the precarious economy of quarrying, coal-mining and then canal-boating, that allowed the settlers of the waste on the fringe of two parishes to win a livelihood. I almost felt I had known William Bailey, the collier who had rushed up a tiny stone house with its vegetable garden, and then had his annual fine for encroachment turned into a rent and in time was persuaded by the lord-of-the-manor to become a freeholder. Once taught to look, I could see the stages by which his house had grown. One of the neighbours told me about his successor Joe Evans, who died only a few years ago and who had planted the hedge around the Ebenezer Baptist Chapel opposite.

As we parted, back at the pub, we lamented current threats to both WEA and extra-mural classes. Because I can't imagine any more cost-effective way of transforming us from sightseers into historians.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

We believe our supermarkets should also be convenience stores.

We at Tesco have always done our utmost to provide a service for all our customers. And in today's changing times, we believe that means Sunday opening.

Sunday is the day that people should be able to choose their own leisure pursuits, that includes shopping if they so wish.

Not only that, but the number of working married women has tripled in the last forty years, leaving Sunday as the only free day for shopping.

These are the sort of changes we can't ignore. And so as not to inconvenience our customers, Tesco backs Sunday trading.

TESCO

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The 1950 Shop Act, which restricts Sunday trading, is under attack as never before. **Ben Webb** looks at both sides of the argument

Traders of the lost act

Last weekend, 80,000 gaily coloured balloons rose from supermarket and DIY centre car forecourts across England and Wales. The occasion was National Sunday Shopping Day, a media event staged by the Shopping Hours Reform Council—the industry-sponsored lobby pronounced "shark" by its opponents. Sunday shoppers were invited to celebrate their freedom to buy with petitions to sign; shopworkers were reminded of their "right to work". The 80,000 balloons represented the jobs that would be at risk, according to the SHRC, if the country were to return to the bad old days before Sunday trading.

Last Sunday's extravaganza followed hard on a *coup de théâtre* two days earlier. On Friday, the big "multiples"—the grocery giants, along with Kingfisher and other Sunday openers—committed themselves for the first time to statutory premium payments for Sunday working and the right not to work Sundays. It was an attempt to patch what had been the Sunday trading lobby's Achilles heel—public and parliamentary concern about conditions for Sunday shopworkers. It was also good timing, the secret of campaigning as much as of comedy: Roger Boaden of the SHRC admits that Friday's announcement "ran in parallel to what is happening on Sunday. We wanted to keep some momentum."

From the forecourts and car parks, the story then moved to the seaside for the next fortnight. Delegates to Labour Party conference will be treated to more than the usual persuasion as lobbyists descend with their stage armies, briefings and opinion poll results. Expect to see stands from the SHRC, Keep Sunday Special, the Retailers for Shop Act Reform, Kingfisher, Sainsbury's, Superdrug and Woolworth's (£4,000 a shot, not including VAT), adverts in the Conference Guide (£1,650 per page) and sited posters (£200 each). Most will centre on the benefits of Sunday opening. Receptions follow. Liberal Democrats can expect four pages of pravda in their conference literature, and the Conservatives will not be forgotten.

The Sunday trading lobby believes it is on a roll. The government has set out four options for Sunday opening in a white paper and bill, ranging from retouching the current rules to complete deregulation. The bill is to be debated late this autumn, the first time the issue will have got a full parliamentary airing since Conservative MPs defied a three-line whip to defeat Margaret Thatcher's plans for deregulation back in 1986. And the Sunday-opening lobby has not been sitting on its hands. The SHRC has attempted to challenge the 1950 Shop Act in the High Court and the European Court. Affiliated organisations have lobbied local councils that opposed Sunday trading. Meanwhile, chains supporting the SHRC have been opening on Sundays.

Shopping Hours Reform Council

Eighty thousand jobs are at risk if the country returns to the bad old days before Sunday trading

Above all, the lobby has been doing its homework. According to the admirably frank Boaden, the SHRC is spending some £900,000 a year on its efforts. This sum has bought it extensive market research, killer illustrations of the absurdities of the current legislation and a political strategy that it believes will win it the day in parliament. That strategy is what surfaced on Friday.

"We looked very hard at what went wrong in 1985 and 1986, and we decided we would address the problems," says Boaden. "What we found in our market research, everywhere we looked, was concern about the Sunday shopworker."

The SHRC engaged Eldred Bachnik QC (Tony Blair's old boss) to draw up a "legal framework and code of best practice", and urged its member companies to adopt it, the better to neutralise the opposition. "Once these principles are established," says Boaden, "our research tells us up to 93 per cent of people will support Sunday opening."

The SHRC's new tack has not exactly caught its opponents napping, but it has forced them on to the defensive. Usdaw, the shopworkers' union, "welcomed" Friday's announcement from the industry majors, but insisted it was "not adequate to prevent exploitation". Usdaw wants a statutory right to refuse Sunday working and statutory double time for existing and future workers.

Pat Jones of Usdaw believes he sees the game plan: "I suspect they are pitching to Labour MPs now. Since the abolition of the wages councils, a lot of MPs have been very suspicious, and this announcement by the companies might allay their fears."

But not Usdaw's. It is still supporting the SHRC's direct opponent, the Keep Sunday Special Campaign (KSSC), despite the attempts to prise apart the coalition of church, smaller retail and labour interests that defeated Sunday shopping deregulation last time.

KSSC took over the mantle of Sunday observance from the venerable Lord's Day Observance Society in the early 1980s. It is a new-style lobby, led by evangelical Christians but not averse to alliances with Rome or labour. It is an emanation of the Jubilee Centre, a Christian organisation with which it shares premises in Cambridge, but is supported by all the major Christian denominations, Usdaw and Unison, Chambers of Commerce and some smaller chains. It downplays religious arguments, and accepts a long list of exceptions to closed Sundays. It shares a name and a strategy with similar groups in North America.

KSSC's watchword is not God but the Family—in the early 1980s it offered a twist on body and blood by distributing Sunday joints at a press conference. Aside from that *leitmotif*, it plays the full register of issues: small shop closure, working conditions, increased traffic to out-of-town stores. It has its own poll results to quote: according to an NOP survey it commissioned this summer, the good, round figure of 80 per cent of respondents (and 85 per cent of women) said that KSSC's proposals for limited opening would be good enough for them.

KSSC, like the other lobbying outfits, tries to ring the right bells. They have the interests of women at heart, for example. Yet it turns out that Tesco also cares: "We are particularly keen to communicate the fact that supermarkets are largely used and staffed by women and it is important that their voice is heard in this debate," reads a letter from the firm's public affairs manager.

The National Association of Sunday Shopworkers, in the person of its "national coordinator" Nicole Lander, plays on the same keys. "Eighty per cent of Sunday shopworkers are women who appreciate the opportunity to work, getting double time and without childcare costs. I can fully understand their needs."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Choice on Sunday

Millions of people now shop every Sunday. In supermarkets and car boot sales, garden centres and garages, craft fairs and Do-It-Yourself sheds consumers are voting with their trolleys, bags and baskets in the great Sunday Shopping debate.

But few want Sunday to be just like any other day of the week. Nor do they want to see shop staff forced to work against their will.

MPs are to be given a free vote on a Bill this Autumn. They will be given a range of options on Sunday shopping hours. These range from total deregulation, ending any special treatment for Sunday, to options that will close most shops and sack or cut the wages of 80,000 mainly women shop workers.

The Shopping Hours Reform Council option is the balanced solution. We want to see small shops free to open all day, with large shops limited to six hours after 10 am.

But that is only part of the answer. We are also campaigning for full legal protection for Sunday shop workers. No one should be forced to work if they do not want to, and the special nature of Sunday work should be rewarded with premium pay.

Some of Britain's best knows stores, such as Sainsbury's, ASDA, Boot's, B&Q, Tesco and Safeway are urging MPs to include these cast-iron legal guarantees in the new law. Ministers may not like it, but we believe that only a solution combining employee protection and sensible Sunday shopping hours can command a Commons majority.

Labour MP Janet Anderson makes the case for change in a new pamphlet. It is called 'Choice on Sunday', and that sums up our case. Everyone should be free to choose for themselves whether to shop or whether to work on Sunday. That is the way to make Sunday special. That is the only solution which will be permanent, popular and practical.

Send for Janet Anderson's pamphlet from the address below. It is free to New Statesman readers.

Sunday Shopping campaign

Freedom without a free-for-all

For more information, and a copy of Janet Anderson's pamphlet, contact:
Shopping Hours Reform Council, 36 Broadway, St James's London SW1H OBH.
Tel: 071 233 0366.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Reading from her own press release, Lander says of the big chains' agreement to endorse statutory premiums: "Our members are delighted." (Her 600 members are mainly women, mainly Sunday-only workers, and mainly Kingfisher employees. Lander herself is a "retail consultant" and, it must be said, a pro in the lobbying arts.)

Lobbying takes different forms, and the quotes switch from attributable to not, once conversation turns to the serious business of rubbishing the opposition. The dark hints flow: are the big multiples in league with the Tories, anticipating a payoff for political contributions? Are the sabbatarians moral majority types with dubious connections? It is a relief after all the innuendo to hear the principled, if petulant, remarks of the old-fashioned "free thought" lobby.

"There is no reason for any restriction on any special day of the week or day of the year, for any purpose," opines Nicolas Walter of the Rationalist Press Association. "Why should there be criminal legislation protecting the Christian holy day? That is the only point. The rest is waffle." But what of the argument that Sunday working disrupts the rhythm of the week, and prevents parents from being with their children? "Phoney arguments. If you don't want to work on Sunday, get another job. You're not forced to take particular jobs in this country."

It is not quite so cut and dried for the other players in the Sunday trading contest. Coming up the middle in the upcoming parliamentary debate, and spending less than the SHRC (but still well into six figures per annum, it is said) is the Retailers for Shop Act Reform (RSAC). This group is spearheaded by Marks and Spencer, and is attempting to limit Sunday opening to the peak period of the four weeks preceding Christmas. To make the point persuasive, it has engaged the PR firm Shandwick Communications (SHRC uses Burson-Marsteller in the person of Des Wilson). Its members include Iceland, the grocery discounter Kwik Save, Netto and the rest of the high street alphabet.

"We don't accept that anyone should be stampeded into Sunday opening just because the others are doing it"

"Those four weeks are the only time in the year when there is a genuine consumer need, when there really is pressure on the retailers and on the customer," says Gill Dandy of Shandwick. "Otherwise, it is bound to be detrimental, and predatory. The long-term consequences will be shop closures, lost jobs, reduced choice, and higher prices."

Perhaps true, but not enough to absolve RSAC of the reply, "She would say that, wouldn't she?" Dandy agrees that the line of conflict between the full-blown deregulators and her clients is, essentially, high street versus parking lots. High streets are dead zones on Sunday; fringe-of-town supermarket majors and DIY stores make their own markets by opening on Sundays, and increasingly offer a range of shops-within-shops to rival the high street. You can plot almost exactly how retailers fall on Sunday trading by their location on or away from the high street.

The John Lewis Partnership, which includes the Waitrose supermarket chain, has resisted the drift of retailers to the RSAC and its compromise formula, insisting that opening four Sundays a year will prove to be only the thin edge of a wedge. "If four, why not five or six?" asks Marek Effendowicz, the partnership spokesperson. "We don't accept that anyone should be stampeded into Sunday opening just because the others are doing it. And we hold to the principle that if it's against the law, we don't do it."

Effendowicz doubts whether there are long-term gains for anyone in Sunday opening, arguing there will be high overheads, to be passed on eventually in prices. "We've likened it to a concert where the people in the front row stand up, then everyone behind them has to get up in turn. In the end, nobody gets a better view."

There is a problem with the metaphor. Badmannered people in the prime seats actually do get a better line of vision by standing up. And so with the big retailers. The statistics currently available suggest that DIY stores

Deregulation is no way to treat shopworkers

Changing the Sunday trading law

If the Government were to persuade Parliament to repeal all regulations governing shopping hours and legalise unlimited or widespread Sunday trading it would be very bad news for shopworkers and for small shopkeepers. Shop staff would soon be expected to work regular Sundays for no extra pay. Thousands of permanent full-time jobs would go with more and more staff employed as weekend-only casuals.

Usdaw, the Shopworkers Union, says no Option to change the 1950 Shops Act should be supported unless it:

- ❑ Guarantees all shop managers and staff the legal right to refuse to work on Sundays. This must cover both new and existing employees.
- ❑ Gives a legal entitlement to double-time payment for those who choose to work Sundays. Otherwise Sunday will become a normal working day – first in retailing – then generally.

Don't sacrifice shopworkers on the altar of Deregulation

Usdaw UNITY IS STRENGTH

President: **AUDREY WISE** *General Secretary:* **D. GARFIELD DAVIES**

Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers
188 Wilmslow Road, Manchester M14 6LJ

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

are doing better out of Sunday opening than supermarkets—B & Q claims to do 23 per cent of its trading on Sundays; Currys talks of 17-18 per cent. Sainsbury's, by contrast, has registered an increase of only about 4 per cent on volume since it started Sunday trading, half of this, say sceptics, attributable to special offers. Are the supermarket majors cutting off their nose to spite their face?

Not if one looks at the bigger picture. Apart from Asda, which has problems all its own, the big food retailers, representing something around one-half of the market, have mortgaged themselves to the future. Argyll (aka Safeway, etc) has put £601 million into new plant and fixtures in the last fiscal year; Tesco has sunk £653 million; Sainsbury's spend is £787 million. These sums are in the range of a seventh to a quarter of the companies' book value, very serious amounts at a time when we are told we are in the grip of a recession. Their aim is to catch the wind of change. "We are looking at a response to consumer and social trends, a restructuring of patterns that the large companies are responding to, but also helping to make," says a risk consultant at London's City University.

These companies are playing a long game, banking (quite literally) on an increase in market share, and at the same time minding the value of their shares, which are "underperforming" by about 30 per cent on the markets. The majors have plant that can be used, and for which they are already paying, in interest, business rates and overheads. Against this, paying premiums to Sunday workers, and even having that graven into law, is a small price to pay. And £900,000 a year for lobbying, auxiliary organisations and publicity is a pittance.

Flouting the 1950 Shop Act has been very easy meat. Roger Boaden of the Shop Hours Reform Council puts it neatly: "Every one of the 145,000 shops in Britain has been breaking the law for a long time, and I defy you to find an exception. And in fact something like 60 per cent of the goods supermarkets are selling on Sundays is perfectly legal. The law is outdated, and extremely anomalous."

The Sunday trading lobby may, then, have its way this time around. And the stakes are too high for them not to have pulled out all the stops. The likely effects on the high street and the neighbourhood are predictable. But the Conservative Party is not like the CDU in Germany or even the respectable right in France—it is not loyal or beholden to the small-business interest, whatever the rhetoric.

"If Tesco or Sainsbury's are absolutely determined, I don't really see how this will be resisted over the long haul," says Tony Cleaver, the BP scholar in Economic Understanding at Durham University. "And this is quite aside from whatever the social impact will be. It is a matter of social choice, and we seem to have made that choice."

Karl Marx put it slightly differently. Under capitalism, he wrote, "all that is solid melts into air". So with Family. So with Weekends. And so with the Sabbath.

RSAR

RETAILERS FOR SHOPS ACT REFORM

"The Compromise Solution to Sunday Trading"

RSAR represents the views of retailers large and small, from the High Streets' best known names to small local shops.

Our proposals are the only genuine middle ground option which will be included in the Sunday Trading Bill to be introduced by the government later this year. They are a practical solution which will meet the needs of consumers, retailers, employees and the community.

The key proposals are:

- small convenience and leisure shops allowed to open every Sunday;
- garden centres and DIY stores allowed to open every Sunday;
- all shops allowed to open on the four Sundays before Christmas;
- employees to be protected from compulsory Sunday working.

Contact RSAR for further information,
PO BOX 3328, LONDON SW7 4EP
Telephone 071-333 2012

AP0893/NS2

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The environmental movement's success in the US has brought the inevitable backlash. But not all critics are corrupt nor charges unfounded, writes **Thomas Harding**

Mocking the turtle

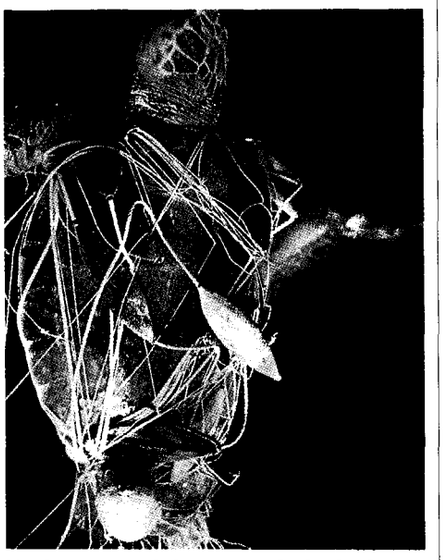
The enemy is not a foreign nation, it's your fellow man. The attack is not from the outside, it's from inside. It's people who put owls and trees over loggers and their families, people who want to shut down your ranch because it's a wetland . . . You must know your enemy. Know what they believe and that they honestly hate you and intend to destroy you. You must become involved individually and collectively if America, as we have known it, is to survive . . . You cannot compromise with these folks: they have nothing to lose, you have everything to lose. Fight smart? Yes. Compromise? No. (T Mader, president, Abundant Wildlife Society).

The environmental movement is now one of the major political forces in the US. The top ten environmental groups have a combined membership bigger than either the Republican or Democratic parties. The National Wildlife Federation alone claims the support of more than five million people. Al Gore was seen by many as *the* environmental congressman before he became vice-president.

Despite their image of being the underdogs, many of these groups are now well integrated into the establishment's economic elite. For example, this year Eastman Kodak gave the World Wide Fund for Nature $2.5 million—its largest-ever single donation—and has its chief executive, Kay Whitmore, on WWF's board. The Audubon Society gets donations from General Electric, Waste Management Inc and Procter and Gamble, and the National Wildlife Federation receives funds from Du Pont, Dow, Monsanto, 3M and Shell. Meanwhile, many environmentalists sit on the corporations' boards.

Over the past 30 years, the US environmental movement has won some dramatic victories. Many of its campaigns have been underwritten by a NIMBY (not in my backyard) mentality. This has meant that the environmental damage has simply moved from the backyards of those powerful enough to complain, to those without the power to stand up for themselves. In other words, though the environmental movement has scored major successes, this has often been at the expense of those with least access to power structures: people of colour, the working class and the third world. While endangered species and sensitive habitats have been protected, argue the critics, the environmentalists have failed to incorporate issues such as jobs, living conditions and prejudice into their agenda.

A typical example of the conflict between



Turtles versus shrimpers: a clash of values

human livelihoods and environmental protection was over the endangered sea turtle that makes its home off the east coast of the US. As with so many similar conflicts, the two sides both believe that their views are backed up by logic and feel that their case is clearly in the right.

In the late 1980s, the National Academy of Sciences warned that more than 55,000 turtles would drown annually in American shrimpers' nets unless measures were taken to protect them. By 1991, shrimpers were required to use turtle excluder devices, or TEDs, by the federal Endangered Species Act. TEDs are designed to keep the fish in the net and to allow the turtles to swim out.

Environmentalists pointed out that sea-turtle mortality was reduced by 97 per cent as a result of TEDs being used. They added that trials in 1990 and 1991 in the Gulf of Mexico showed that the shrimp catch, measured in pounds caught per day, was actually higher than in the previous three years.

However, many shrimpers saw the situation in a different way. In Oriental, North Carolina, for example, they have been protesting against the new rules for two years. They claim that TEDs are expensive to manage and threaten an already damaged industry. "To keep them clean means losing time," laments Gary Mason, a shrimper for 15 years. "People don't realise that every minute is a dollar lost. So this is going to put a lot of people out of business around here."

The shrimpers also argue that the national studies do not take account of local circumstances. Whereas most shrimpers fish in the open sea, the Oriental shrimpers fish in Pimlico Sound and catch extremely few turtles. Yet they still have to use TEDs. Another problem these fishermen face is debris. Crab pots and domestic waste become caught in the TEDs, allowing the shrimps, rather than the turtles, to swim right on out.

Such differences of opinion lead to judgments that go beyond reasoned disagreement. A clash of cultural values comes into play, much of it class-based. The majority of environmentalists are white, urban, middle-class and university-educated. Most fishermen are working-class and educated only to secondary school level, and were brought up and live in rural areas.

The environmentalists' values centre around preserving genetic diversity, safeguarding the stability of the ecosystem and maintaining the natural resource base. The fishermen's values revolve around feeding themselves and their families, limiting their days at sea, and preserving their boats and equipment. These conflicting value-systems emerge as opposed versions of "common sense" between the two parties.

One fisherman, Jim, explains: "Your wildlife people come down here and act as though you owe them something, and look at you like you're a bunch of trash. Now you care about the turtle. But when you've got people walking around the street with nothing, well that's not what God wanted. When you place animals above the human race, you need to go back to Genesis. There's nothing greater on Earth than a human being. A turtle can't build a ship or read a blueprint, can he?"

By the late 1980s, the number of "anti-environmental" groups (as they were dubbed by environmentalists) or "true-environmentalists" (as they called themselves) had grown to a fully fledged movement. Perhaps the best known were the groups of loggers who sprang up to defend themselves against those trying to save the spotted owl in the old-growth forests of the Pacific coast of North America. The Oregon-based Yellow Ribbon Coalition is a typical pro-logging group. In 1989, the following advertisement appeared in *American Timberman and Trucker*:

"A CALL TO ARMS: Our timber communities are under siege. If we do not unite we will perish, the victims of the radical preservationist movement that is destroying our communities and timber industry. Mills are closing. Hard-working men and women—family people—are losing their jobs, the direct result of preservationist lawsuits and timber sale appeals that are locking up our forests. We must unite in our common defense."

By 1993, more than 400 groups had registered with the Alliance for America, the national anti-environment coalition that grew out of the now moribund Wise Use Movement, which had been set up in 1988. On the register were dissatisfied miners, oil-rig operators, off-road vehicle enthusiasts, property-rights activists, tuna fishermen, sheep shearers, as well as shrimpers and loggers—

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The UK scene

Compared to the US, environmental legislation is less developed in Britain and there are neither the same vast wildernesses nor the large numbers of communities still dependent on a single resource. Again, the UK does not have the same grassroots environmental tradition as the US, nor the fervent defenders of private property rights.

For the most part, non-business resistance to the environmental movement has come from right-wing lobby groups. The International Freedom Foundation initiated a smear attack against the Green Party, alleging that they had been "overt" in their support of international terrorism. Similarly, the Libertarian Alliance held a one-day conference, "Environmentalism: the threat to freedom", in September 1992.

Anti-environmentalism within the business community has been limited to denying environmentalist claims, such as British Nuclear Fuels claiming that nuclear energy is good for the greenhouse effect. However, the Timber Trades Federation has taken a leaf out of the US book by setting up Forests Forever—whose literature states, among other things, that "the timber industry does not destroy rainforests". Schoolchildren have raised funds for Forests Forever thinking it was a normal environmental group.

The only evidence of resource-use backlash has been in the fishing industry, where fishermen have organised mass actions against the Sea Fish Conservation Act, passed in December 1992, which ended in their being granted a judicial review. This will start on 1 November in the High Court.

"I think the environmentalists have a point," says Andrew Gillam, a small fisherman from Brighton, "but it can't work. The act will kill the industry. If it comes to choosing between overfishing and us surviving, it's got to be overfishing."

By all accounts, it is the large trawlers that are to blame and a potential merging of interests would seem possible between environmental groups and small fishermen—like the UK Safe Alliance, where environmental consumers and small farmers share a common platform. But as the fishermen's union (the National Federation of Fishermen's Organisations) represents big and small boats alike, neither the union nor environmental groups have shown any interest in working together.

Greenpeace has stated that: "Our supporters pay us to protect the environment [and] that's why we are not supporting the fishermen's fight against the act." However, it has made some efforts at reaching out to fishing communities. During the recent UN Conference on Fisheries, held earlier this year, Greenpeace was part of an informal grouping of environmentalists, fishermen and coastal communities. Since then, it has built the grouping into a coalition of more than 100 organisations.

groups as diverse as the Alaska Women in Timber, the National Rifle Association, the Idaho Snowmobile Association and the Kentucky Landowners Association.

Last September, the Alliance organised the "Fly in for Freedom". Five hundred activists flew into Washington DC to "put people back into the environmental equation". They came to lobby Congress on the forthcoming amendment to the Endangered Species Act, and to encourage George Bush to take a pro-jobs line in the presidential elections.

The tactic was made clear by Ron Arnold, one of the original founders of the Wise Use Movement: "The environment movement is the establishment now, and we are the rebels coming to tear them down. Now they're Goliath, and we're David, and we intend to put the stone in their head."

Their "Getting Your Story To the Media" leaflet handed out to all the participants, read: "Tell your personal story. Paint word pictures for the reporter that provide compelling and emotional images. Convey that hard-working American families like yours are being seriously hurt by environmental extremism."

The visitors' first event was a candle-lit vigil outside the Capitol, holding red, white and blue neon flares and singing the *Star Spangled Banner*. Two days later, they protested outside CBS—with placards reading, "Put people first", and "Honk if you use toilet paper"—for not giving them a chance to tell their side of the story.

A tearful log-truck owner told a camera crew that "timbermen have become an endangered species". Valerie Johnson from the Oregon Lands Coalition went further: "People have had enough. The government's got too big. There's going to be a revolution in this country. This time from within." That night, all the networks covered the story: that grassroots America was fed up with environmentalism. Last week, on 18 September, a second "Fly In" attracted 400 people.

By the time environmentalists got round to dealing with the charges that they had neglected social justice issues, many of the "anti-environmental" groups had fallen prey to conservative groups and corporations that had emerged during the years of the Reagan presidency. This was an extremely useful screen for such corporations to hide behind.

It also provided justification for dismissing the grievances of the antis. For a start, environmentalists could point at the Wise Use Movement itself. This was started by Ron Arnold and Alan Gottleib, who both work at the Center for Defense of Free Enterprise, a far-right think tank whose directors had been fundraisers for the Republicans. A year before setting up the Wise Use Movement, Gottleib stated: "Right now the environmental movement is a perfect bogeyman for us. In order to get people to join and donate money we need opposition."

One of the best examples of manipulation by corporate groups quoted by environmentalists was People for the West!, itself a member of Alliance for America. People for the West! was set up by 50 mining corporations in 1989 when Congress threatened to revise the 1872 Mining Law, which effectively gives mining companies unlimited access to public land. By 1991, 12 of 13 board members were mining industry executives, and over 200 corporations had contributed more than $800,000, which made up 96 per cent of People for the West!'s budget.

Another was the National Wetlands Coalition. It also appeared on the scene in 1989 with glossy literature, a logo of a duck flying blissfully over a wetland marsh, and claims to be preserving wetlands habitats. In fact, the group—whose corporate members include Chevron, Exxon, BP, Amoco and Marathon Oil—has thrown its lobbying weight behind several bills in Congress that would substantially *decrease* wetlands protection.

Thus it was easy for the environmental movement to counter the attacks of working-class resource-users who felt their livelihoods were threatened by the emerging environmental legislation. By smearing their arguments with the tar of corporate and conservative infiltration (ironically, considering the environmentalists' own dependence on corporate sponsorship), the environmentalists managed to deflect the media's attention away from the working class's genuine concerns, over to conspiratorial theories centring on the military-industrial complex.

Yet these are not the only groups who have been criticising the environmental movement for lacking a social agenda. Over the past few years, a major rift has emerged between the established mainstream groups like the National Wildlife Federation, the Sierra Club, the Audubon Society and Wilderness Society, and smaller more radical community groups: the "environmental justice movement". But unlike the Alliance for America, they have levelled charges that are not as easy to brush away.

Much of the environmental justice movement's thinking has come from the communities of people of colour, who began making the links between the environment and social justice in the early 1980s. In their landmark publication, *We Speak For Ourselves*, Dana Alston, director of the Washington-based Environment, Community Development and Race Project, explains the origins of the movement:

"Research has shown that communities of colour are targets for toxic dumping and for the placement of this country's hazardous industries, a phenomenon that has come to be known as 'environmental racism' . . . This approach has increasingly brought environmental justice groups into conflict with the mainstream movement, which people of colour have perceived to be mostly white, middle and upper class, and insensitive to the needs and agendas of minorities. Environmental justice groups have considered the major national environmental organisations to be predominantly interested in leisure

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and recreation, wildlife and wilderness preservation and similar issues."

When the Wilderness Society bought up tracts of New Mexico to turn it into a national park, they failed to consult with the local Native American community who viewed it as their ancient hunting ground. Similarly, while a local environmental group wished to close down a Levi plant in Texas to halt toxic emissions, the South West Organising Project—a multi-issue multi-ethnic group—was fighting to keep the plant open so that local people could keep their jobs, and at the same time campaigning for the emissions to be cleaned up. In the words of Swop organiser Michael Guerrero: "Toxic contamination is not just an environmental issue in our neighbourhoods. It is equally important as social and racial justice whose impact can be just as severe as that of unemployment or the lack of adequate housing, health care and education."

Many environmental justice groups are working across the Mexican border to halt the North American Free Trade Agreement, which they see as a threat to both labour conditions and environmental protection; while the "Shameful Seven" (National Wildlife Federation, Nature Conservancy, Environment Defense Fund, WWF, NRDC, Audubon Society and the Defenders of Wildlife) support the agreement.

One of the few generally agreed-upon positive outcomes from the Earth Summit in Rio was that environmental groups became more sensitive to integrating social awareness into their ecological thinking. This occurred mainly as a result of pressure from third-world groups concerned that northern environmentalists were setting the environment before development issues, as well as from women's groups angry that reproductive rights were being placed below consumption issues in the debate over population.

Unfortunately, this new awareness has remained mainly with the few individuals who were exposed to the Rio summit. And while Bill Clinton and Al Gore are in the White House, the "anti-environmental" movement in the US looks set to grow to contend with what they see as regulations "based on tea-leaf readings and Tarot card predictions". This will enable far-right groups to manipulate the real problems communities are facing as a result of environmental regulations.

So what can environmental groups do to protect themselves? It is clear that underlying the antagonism are two genuine concerns: the resource-users (miners, fishermen, loggers and so on), who perceive their resources being "locked up", and the environmental justice movement, who see their social welfare ignored. Therefore, if environmental groups are to avoid attack, then they must, in the words of Lois Gibbs, founder of the Citizen's Clearinghouse for Hazardous Waste, "start integrating social justice into their fight for the protection of the environment".

Thomas Harding is director of Small World, a non-profit media organisation that fights for environment and economic justice in the UK and abroad

GREEN GAUGE

Are green parties simply protest coalitions doomed to political failure? **Vicky Hutchings** has her suspicions

Last week, the Green Party had its conference in Hastings. It discussed, according to the *Independent* (one of the few papers to give it any substantial coverage) whether or not people would still have private gardens in the free society. Or should every spare inch be put towards the production of food and the recycling of dung? It is hard to believe that despite such excitement, the party's membership has shrunk from 6,123 last November to 4,571 in July.

Now, it is well known that green parties in other countries do better than here, for the simple reason that with first-past-the-post a green vote is a wasted vote. But elsewhere, green parties don't form governments. There are no green prime ministers, nor green presidents. Like the Green Party in Britain—which in June this year saw a sort of branching out by the disaffected Green Realignment group and by Sara Parkin and Jonathon Porritt's search for a common "sustainability" programme among green pressure groups—green parties tend to fragment. In Germany, the quarrels between the realos and the fundis have been extremely bitter. In France these days, there are now two green parties: Les Verts and Genération Ecologie.

This week I have been reading *Eco-socialism: from deep ecology to social justice* by David Pepper (recently published by Routledge, £10.99). It is a fascinating analysis of environmental politics. And two conclusions seem to be inescapable: first, that the existence of green parties *at all* is a sign of the failure of the existing political parties, a sort of protest party; and second, that green parties are destined to fail, since they bring together disaffected, and politically opposed, members whose own parties have failed them.

In describing the traditional conservative's environmentalism, Pepper writes about people I have met in the Green Party. Here's where some of them are coming from: "The words 'conservation' and 'conservatism' both have the same root. And in traditional conservatism the ideas of tradition, continuity, stability and dislike of sudden change but an acceptance of slow organic change—all of these are compatible with environmentalist thought. In conservatism the analogy between society and nature is strong . . .

"These beliefs foster a romantic view of 'traditional' societies. So there is a liking for 'traditional' pastoral landscapes . . . expressed in Britain in the work of long-established nature and conservation groups like the National Trust, Councils for the Protection of Rural England and Wales, Country Landowners' Association, the Farming, Wildlife and Advisory Group and the Civic Trust."

But his sections on market liberalism (people are a resource, and consumer pressure will ensure environment-friendly products), welfare liberalism (green consumerism plus planning and taxation for environmental protection), democratic socialism (public transport and an emphasis on improving the urban environment) and revolutionary socialism (class conflict is vital in the change to a green and socially just world), each contain the basis for a Green Party manifesto.

If you can't imagine a party where Conservatives, Labour supporters and Liberal Democrats work together for a common end, why on earth does anyone expect the green parties to behave any differently?

Next week sees the publication of *Vital Signs 1993-1994* (Earthscan, £9.95), the second in the annual series from the Worldwatch Institute on "the trends that are shaping our future". And the signs are not good. Grain output per person continues to fall at a rate of about 1 per cent a year, fish catches have declined by 7 per cent per capita since 1989. And one of the reasons for this is that population growth, which slowed down in the 1970s, has shown no inclination to repeat the achievements of that decade. As expected, it is the rich countries that have the lowest rise, the poorest countries, the highest. Africa, where incomes are now lower than they were at the start of the 1980s, continues to be the fastest-growing continent. The populations of Iran, Nigeria and Pakistan are set to double in 20, 23 and 23 years respectively. In the UK it is 267 years. In Germany 654. The numbers of official refugees reached an all-time high.

As Thomas Harding argues in this section, the environment cannot be divorced from basic issues of employment, race, feminism and class; of social justice not only between rich and poor within the rich countries, but also between the rich north and the poor south. And where you fit into the system, and into which particular system, will influence your views and attitudes not only to other people, but also to the environment.

Your fight to protect the environment might not be mine, since your environment might not be mine. As such, the essential opposing political forces have always seemed to me to be between left and right. And the sooner the main political parties get their acts together, the better. This week, the Liberal Democrat conference. Next week Labour. The week after, the Conservatives. *That's* where the greens should be gathering.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Fri 1st October
The Tythe Barn,
St. Donat's Castle
WALES
0446 794848

Sun 3rd October
Adrian Boult Hall
BIRMINGHAM
021 236 2392 or 643 2514

Fri 8th October
The Marina Theatre
LOWESTOFT
0502 573318

Wed 13th October
Caedmon Hall,
Central Libraray
GATESHEAD
091 4773478

Fri 15th October
The Arts Centre
DARLINGTON
0325 483168

Sat 16th October
Forum 2B
BARROW IN FURNESS
0229 820000

Sun 17th October
Marsden Mechanics
MARSDEN
0484 843701

Fri 12th November
The Stables
WAVENDON
0908 583928

Thu 2nd December
Playhouse
OXFORD
0865 798600

PLUS STAN TRACEY CELEBRATION-
50 years in music
music from solo to the big band

Tue 30th November
Queen Elizabeth Hall
LONDON
071 928 8800
or Ticketmaster 071 344 4444

STAN TRACEY OCTET

On Tour Autumn 1993

Featuring the Amandla Suite, commissioned by UNISON and *Portraits Plus* - Stan Tracey's Blue Note recording which has been shortlisted for the Mercury Music Award.

Sponsored by UNISON

THE SOUTH BANK CENTRE

Arts Council Funded

JAZZ FM

ICA TALKS

3 October 14.00 - 16.00hrs

• JUDITH BUTLER
SUBJECTION

Judith Butler's writing on queer theory, including *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* and *Bodies that Matter,* has radically influenced current debates on philosophy and feminism.
SUBJECTION explores the ambiguous condition of subjection as the condition of "becoming a subject" and the productive tension between Foucault and psychoanalysis.
Introduced by **Peter Osborne**, of Middlesex University, with **Parveen Adams**, of Brunel University and editor of *October.*
Tickets £6.50 including day membership

ICA **Institute of Contemporary Arts**
The Mall London SW1 071 930 3647
reg charity no 236848

TUC

To mark its 125th anniversary the TUC has produced a 60 page illustrated book charting the history of Britain's national trade union centre, from its origins in Manchester through the turmoil of the 1920s and 1930s, the post war reconstruction and the legislative assaults of the past 14 years. It also looks to the future of trade unionism in Britain. It is titled 'Working for Your Future' and is available, price £5 plus 50p p&p, from TUC Publications.

An audio cassette featuring the voices of trade union leaders past and present is also available (also price £5 plus 75p p&p)

For details of these and other TUC publications, send a 10"x 7" sae to:

Publications Department TUC
Congress House
Great Russell Street
London WC1B 3LS

Council tax is just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to paying for local services. Below the surface is a financial system by which local government sinks or swims. To understand how councils work and how government funds them you need to dive into:

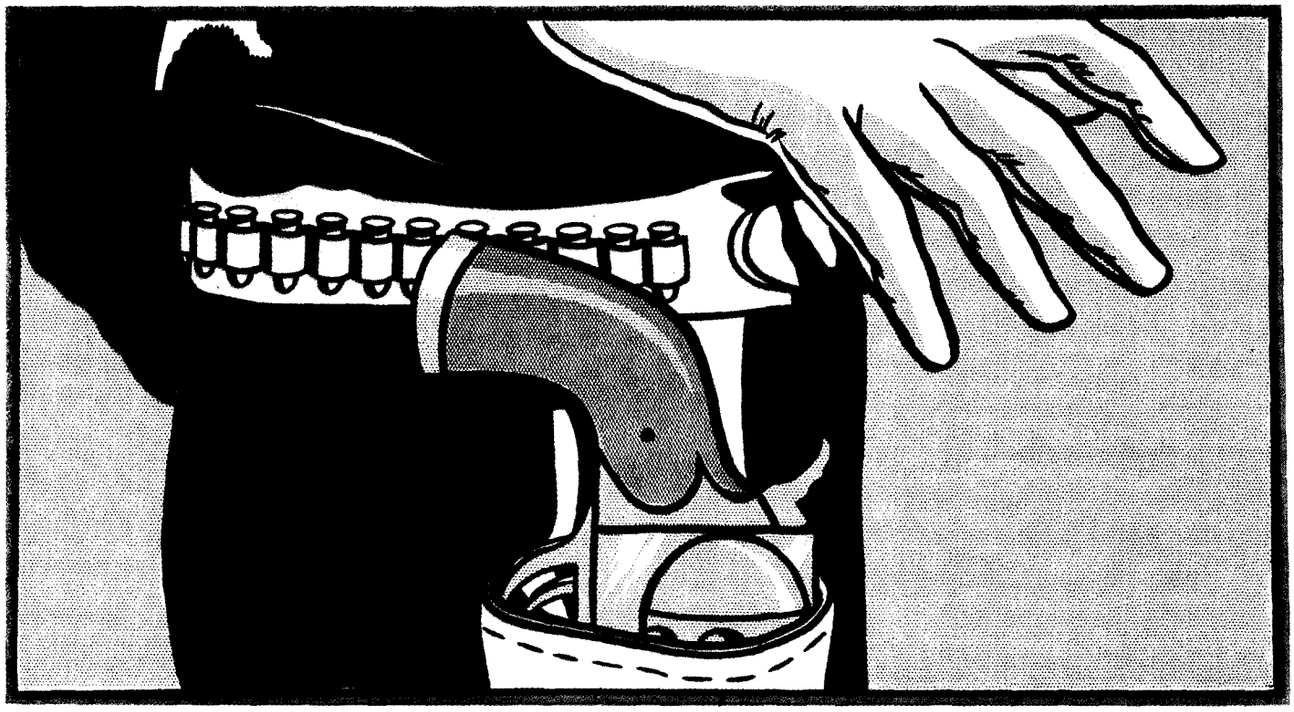
The LGIU Guide to Local Government Finance

This easy to read guide explains:
- why councils need money
- where they get it from
- how the government controls what they spend
- council tax
- how to read a council's budget
- business rates
- capping
- and much, much more.

Order your copy now by returning the form below.

Please send me.....copies of ***The LGIU Guide to Local Government Finance*** at £9.95 a copy (p&p free). Bulk prices on request.
Name.....
Organisation.....
Address.....
.....
.....Postcode.....
I enclose a cheque (payable to the Local Government Information Unit) for £.....
Return to: LGIU (guide), 2nd Floor, 1-5 Bath Street, London EC1V 9QQ

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Roy Lichtenstein's "Fastest Gun" (1963)

In Berlin, people protested against "American imperialism"; here the only worry has been who's made it on to the exhibition's A list, reports **Rose Jennings**

American as plaster meat

First, there's the footgear. In order not to muss up the newly whited Saatchi Gallery floor (the TV crews are coming in later), we've all been issued with white cotton overshoes.

It's the opening of *American Art in the 20th Century*. The exhibition has been put together by the Royal Academy's Norman Rosenthal and Berlin-based Christos Joachimedes, whose previous collaborations include *The New Spirit in Painting*, in 1981, and the first showing of Joseph Beuys in this country. But where, in Berlin, the opening night saw a protest contingent denouncing "American imperialism", here the emphasis has been on who has and hasn't made Rosenthal and Joachimedes' A list.

Jackson Pollock is in; Lee Krasner isn't. Frank Stella, Clyfford Still, De Kooning, yes: Motherwell, Frankenthaler, Morris Louis, no. 1930s modernists Charles Sheeler and Stuart Davis, yes: 1930s regionalists Grant Wood and Thomas Hart Benton, no. Koons, yes, ditto his contemporary Mike Kelley (snogging teddies—pop remade for the therapy generation); Louise Bourgeois, no—a "kitsch" artist, believes Rosenthal.

American 20th-century art, by this reckoning, takes off with the abstract expressionists. It swings on through pop, minimalism, and then takes a bit of a jump—no Acconci-type funsters, no messing with baseline definitions of art as tangible commodity—to end up with familiar mid-career names like Holzer, Schnabel and Bruce Nauman.

They do not believe that there was any loss of supremacy in the late 1970s, or that the contemporary artist is any less entitled to feel at home in his world, on the absolute cusp of things, as he did in the 1950s and 1960s. Out of 65 artists exhibited, five are women, and three are black. Of his excisions, Rosenthal is reported as saying: "In the end you had to say, 'If this artist had not existed, would it really have made a big difference?'" Er, how long is a piece of string?

After Duchamp, Man Ray, and some wonderful Hoppers, the show opens with some lesser forerunners to the Big Story. Here, while you can see what the organisers are getting at, the actual works rarely bear out the promise of machine-age verve happily disinterred.

Curious, yes, that Charles Demuth prefiguring Jasper Johns with his *I Saw the Figure Five in Gold* (1928), or that *Buildings Lancaster*, by the same artist, looks forward to Ed Ruscha: but faced with the paintings themselves, the colours often seem garish, the line uncertain.

One exception might be Charles Sheeler. Painter and photographer, Sheeler is best known for *Mannahatta*, an experimental film made in 1915 with Paul Strand, and for his stark, hyper-realist, and always unpeopled paintings of industrial plants, skyscrapers and interiors.

He's also an artist—as Karen Lucic relates in *Charles Sheeler and the Cult of the Machine*—whose iconography could be bent any which way you wanted it. In 1928, after publishing a series of photographs of Ford's plant outside Detroit, he received an invitation from the Soviet government to photograph Russian industry. Twenty years later, though, he's on the rack in a labour newspaper for portraying an industrialist's haven where factories work themselves.

Sheeler's "adoptability", his political opacity, might serve as an interesting *leitmotif* for much of the work that comes after. Not that one is encouraged to pursue any such line of questioning: in fact very much the opposite, as the exhibition suddenly makes a very tight

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

jump cut into abstract expressionism.

Here, rather like the man who cuts a bit off one chair leg, then a bit off the next, and so on until he is finally left holding only the seat, you wonder whether the organisers may not have trimmed off rather more than they intended. Pollock's *Mural* (1943) holds the space, certainly; while a potentially disastrous pairing of Barnett Newman and Rothko—they're hung together in an octagonal room—is jarring, but oddly effective. Cy Twombly's *School of Fontainbleau* (1960)—a mist of colour-sparked scratches and scribbles—sits happily to the side of the *Grand Endeavour*, his lighter, more urbane. Reinhardt is enigmatic: De Kooning lewder than one realised. One could go on: the point being that, while there are many things one could spend time with here, the organisers' slimmed-down version of history is really not much different from any textbook version—just a bit thinner.

Moving into pop and minimalism, Oldenburg's plaster meats, some "soft" sandwiches, look faded, a bit dusty; Warhol's *Electric Chair* still wonderfully crisp. There are some pleasant Rymans and Agnes Martins, Serras and Eva Hesses—minimalism, respectively, in "raw" and "cooked" (warmer, expressionist-inflected) mode.

What does this art mean in the world now; in Britain? While the catalogue takes us through everything from Land Art, to Happenings, to big-player dealers, to The Erotic Dimension (something, incidentally, we get very little of in this family-friendly show), it's perhaps signifcant that Eva Cockcroft gets only one mention in the index.

Cockcroft is the writer who, in a 1974 *Artforum* article, made the case for covert CIA involvement in the New York Museum of Modern Art's late 1950s overseas exhibition programme: and for the larger adoption of Ab-Ex as an emblem of cultural supremacy, free-world super-modernity.

Were Pollock and company CIA sympathisers? Of course not. Was MOMA overly beholden to the Rockefellers and other big corporate families? Well, probably, but is this likely to signify much with a new generation of Becks-wielding art-goers?

And yet, and yet: what about the fact—for example—that Jenny Holzer's American Pavilion installation at the Venice Biennale a few years back, with one of her "truisms" carved in marble, cost, what was it, half a million dollars? Or, indeed, the very particular ways in which people have complained about this blockbuster, regretting the absence of this Post-Painterly Abstractionist or that particularly crucial Pollock—rather than questioning the whole glitzy deal? Maybe all you can say for sure is that American art over the past 40 years has always drawn some of its energy from a kind of artistic nationalism, and that it's always suited us—more than the Germans or French—to dream along with this.

Maybe all you can say is that American art over the past 40 years has drawn some of its energy from an artistic nationalism

In some ways it's something of a relief to get up to the Saatchi Gallery, where works from 1970 to the present day are on display. Not that this selection is even halfway representative: but, at least in this environment of hard currency, axes of the international art world are acknowledged as such. Highpoints include a Bill Viola video installation about—most improbably—St John of the Cross: Koons' vitrined Hoovers and basketball: some frisky Jean-Michel Basquiat paintings. And then, of course, there's Cindy Sherman, without whose thyroid stare and high-school ginghams—it's those film stills again—no Saatchi survey would be complete.

Finally, and as something of a riposte to the gender imbalance in the show, several smaller galleries are presently showing work by American women artists. Agi Katz at the Boundary Gallery professed herself "astonished" at the exclusion of artists like Krasner and Helen Frankenthaler, especially given the blockbuster's claims to cover the development of abstract modernism. Her small exhibition of works on paper includes work by Anni Albers, Krasner and Louise Nevelson. Other interesting pieces reflect 1930s developments in print-making, with artists like Mabel Dwight working under the New Deal Progress Administration projects.

Agnes Martin, at the Serpentine, only started making fully abstracted paintings in her fifties, in the late 1950s. These were made by hand-drawing grids of varying densities, on monochrome surfaces. In 1967, she stopped painting, and moved to Mexico to live alone. In 1975, she started exhibiting again, the paintings now incorporating bands of palely toned colour.

It's hard to describe these works without falling back on all the old landscape/weather/sunlight analogies. Martin herself, in the catalogue, talks rather charmingly about days out at the beach, transcendance achieved before a neighbour's radio breaks the spell. It's a nice image, but not without its naivities. If the radio, the metropolis, did not exist, then neither would the counterpointing impulse to escape such things to achieve other worldliness. And American art in the 20th century would be a much slighter affair altogether.

"American Art in the 20th Century" at the Royal Academy and Saatchi Gallery until 12 December; Agnes Martin at the Serpentine Gallery until 24 October; "American Art in the 20th Century: The Female Perspective" is at the Boundary Gallery until 24 October

Jonathan Romney can't quite keep that upper lip stiff at girls' movies

Tracks of our tears

Is there really such a thing as a "women's picture"? The term evokes Sunday afternoons slumped in front of BBC2, watching black-and-white 1940s tales of noble self-sacrifice with lashings of Vaseline on the lens. You wouldn't have thought the term was much use any more, except perhaps in academic discussions of genre. After all, aren't we all sensitive and sophisticated enough nowadays to let our contingent gender differences just dissolve in the pleasure of the image?

I'm not so sure. I've recently been observing a peculiar phenomenon among colleagues, in which it's becoming apparent that women will like certain films and men won't and vice versa. Of course, I'm generalising on the basis of a small group who spend an inordinate amount of time cloistered in preview theatres, but nevertheless the evidence is striking. A straw poll suggests incontrovertibly that *only* women will enjoy the forthcoming Mexican soap opera *Like Water for Chocolate*, whereas all men will loathe it heartily. Or, on a more complex level, all viewers *without exception* will emerge overwhelmed from Jane Campion's *The Piano*—but only women will actually cry at the end. Look, I'm just going on empirical evidence here.

The question worries me somewhat because I've lately read more than one piece by men on the pleasures of having a good sob in the stalls. Personally, I'm an old-fashioned boy—my ability to weep at the pictures is severely restricted. I will gladly admit to having cried every single time I've seen *The Wizard of Oz*, and at the end of *Edward Scissorhands*. But then I also cried, for reasons that escape me and to my extreme embarrassment, at Schwarzenegger's *Kindergarten Cop*. It's just something I have to work out.

All in all, I seem to be with *GQ* Man and The Cure on this one: boys don't cry. But hold on, though; Nora Ephron's *Sleepless in Seattle* (on general release from 24 September) is there to bear me out. The whole film, in fact, is predicated on the idea that women will weep at the right movies while men will just sneer, but more fool us.

The key scene features Tom Hanks as Sam, a heart-rent widower, sitting around with his best buddy and his wife. She's reminiscing, lump in throat, about the 1957 weepie *An Affair to Remember*, in which Deborah Kerr sits it out pluckily in her wheelchair, not daring to tell Cary Grant why she can't stand up and embrace him. It's an ending that makes no sense except within the rules of the weepie

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Together at last: Meg Ryan and Bill Pullmann

genre, and in those terms it works absolutely.

The woman's in floods of tears; Tom and his pal can't figure it out. "It's a chick's movie," they shrug, and promptly set about mocking her reaction by imagining what it would be like to burst into tears at the end of *The Dirty Dozen*. Sour grapes, of course.

The guys would just love a chance to vent their feelings, epecially Sam, who's been holding it all in since his wife died. Since then, he's grouched around, snubbing colleagues' attempts to win him round, and has retreated from Chicago to drizzly old Seattle in the company of his young son Jonah (a smart but resolutely unadorable kid named Ross Malinger).

Sam's nocturnal mooching upsets the boy enough to call up a radio phone-in agony show—although you imagine that if Dad could predict the next phone bill the tear ducts would open soon enough. Meanwhile, way across America in Baltimore, Annie (Meg Ryan—as ever, ditsy, scatty, smart-as-a-lick-of-paint) is spending Christmas with her staid, nutty family and her fiancé Walter (Bill Pullman, American film's second greatest poker face after Charles Grodin). He's rich, handsome and devoted, but he *is* called Walter, and he has allergies . . . There's nothing exactly wrong with him, but like Karenin and his outsize ears, he has a touch of lantern jaw signalling that he and Annie are not *destined*. Driving home, she hears the plaint of young Jonah, and it's like a bolt from the blue. She has to meet Sam.

As in the best comedy romances, *Sleepless in Seattle* is based on deferral. How long before these people, who are obviously going to meet, actually do? (It won't spoil anything to tell you it's an unconscionably long time.) This is different from the structure of a weepie, which tends to bring people together, but stops them staying together. Here, the inevitable simply takes ages to happen. It's in the eventual gratification that the emotional pay-off comes, in the form of relieved, amused sobbing.

In this respect, *Sleepless* is a knowing spin on Nora Ephron's last great success as script-writer, *When Harry Met Sally*, which also starred Meg Ryan. There, the protagonists—hugely, glaringly, embarrasingly wrong for each other, *ergo* made in heaven—meet, but take ages to actually *meet*. Here they don't meet for ages, although they're inextricably linked: by Destiny, which Annie is unshakeably aware of; by the radio show, which she hears by freakish, irrevocable chance; and by the fact that she's also a sucker for *An Affair to Remember*, which she weeps over with her best buddy Rosie O'Donnel (and the two of them supposedly hard-bitten journalists).

The film's sob quotient depends on the knowing ingenuity with which Ephron—who here directs as well as co-writes—rings her ironic changes on our expectations. She's not afraid to ladle on knowingly shlocky gestures. She gives us Christmas trees fulsomely photographed by Sven Nykvist. She zaps our nostalgia cells with *Stardust, As Time Goes By*, a whole barrel of such Perry Como fodder. She even has the start-crossed lovers linked, in a tawdry outburst of kitsch, by a computer-generated map of the US that makes the flight path of coast-to-coast airlines and presumably of Cupid's arrows too.

Ephron piles these ironic trimmings on, knowing that we're all the more likely to accept them if we find them unacceptable from the outset. The dare is to remind us in advance that life just isn't like the movies, and then to reward us with a wish-fulfilment resolution in which, maybe, it *is*.

So she encourages us to respond either as jaded urbanites, like Sam and his buddy, who just won't swallow that hogwash; or to react against type, the way that Annie and her friend do when they decide to drop all pretence of sophistication and just reach for the Kleenex.

We can react as boys, in which case we simply get the rug pulled from under our feet by the film's sheer bare-faced audacity—like Sam, who ends up simply looking stunned by the whole deal. Or we can react as girls, in which case we get exactly the heart-warming pay-off we're hoping for (on Valentine's Day to boot).

I'm with the boys on *Sleepless in Seattle*. I wasn't prepared to swallow it for a minute, which is precisely why I ended up thoroughly, pleasurably outmanoeuvred. Somehow that didn't happen with *Kindergarten Cop*.

Jonathan Sale's nephew has just topped the charts, but he's not laughing

Don't say crusty

He's just reached number one in the charts. He's performed live on *Top of the Pops*. He's the maniac fiddle-player in the folk-indie-rock group The Levellers, who are now playing at a large venue near you. He's my nephew. He's a disappointment.

Jon shouldn't be in the music trade. I always planned a more steady and respectable career for him—as a comedian. He could have been a taller Ben Elton. Instead, he has been fiddling about with a band of radical rockers. Their new album, also called *The Levellers*, is not quite at the top of the charts any more. It went straight in at number one, but slipped.

"Belaruse", their last single, made the Top 20. Their next single, which will also be taken from the album, will do the same. Please don't buy it; you'll only encourage him.

Sure, I can handle the fame that comes from being the uncle of a rock star. But I always thought that he would follow me into the family business, the comedy trade. Assuming, that is, that being a former staff writer on *Punch* qualifies me as a paid-up member of the laughter industry.

They don't play Glastonbury any more. What with all that overtime, they see it as a "police benefit"

Instead, he is on tour with the band. When Mark, The Leveller's singer, hurt his hand the other day and the dates had to be altered, it made Radio 1. To avoid disappointment, remember that now they will be in Wolverhampton on Friday (24 September) and Saturday, then Liverpool on Sunday and Glasgow on Monday.

They are certainly hard-working. Press coverage always emphasises how it wasn't press coverage that brought them success. Instead, it was a willingness to go where the fans are. (Apart from Glastonbury, where they don't play any more. What with all that overtime, they see it as a "police benefit".) Their constituency is the young libertarian left. "Don't say crusty," begs his sister. The titles don't mess around: "Sell Out"; "Battle of the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Beanfield" and "Liberty Song". The young heirs of E P Thompson buy their CDs.

This is modern folk—but folk music for kids in torn jeans, none of your unaccompanied, hand-behind-the-ear stuff. Their sound is more vogue, not to say in Pogue. It's much tougher, even in the more lyrical and catchy Ratty'n'Mole numbers such as "The Boatman". They offer dissidence you can sing along to: crashing guitar chords and walloping drums, with the trademark sound of the soaring fiddle that brings the echo of the traditional jig to the wildest gig.

Anyway, I'm not complaining, as Eeyore used to say. I just thought I'd mention that it wasn't what I had in mind when I used to send him a copy of *Punch* every week. Or when I introduced him to Terry Jones, whose brother lived next door and who showed us a Python movie or two with a sheet for a screen. Pretty soon Jon could act out with a mate the Python TV sketches and recite the records.

Some people laugh a lot and some people are natural humorists. Unusually, he was both. The two lads had picked up a guitar (though not necessarily the ability to play it) and their rendition of "Mull of Kintyre" was even funnier than Paul McCartney's.

What Jon could play properly was the violin. That is not a particularly hilarious instrument; a banjo or a small accordion would be a better prop for an act. Yet Victor Borge bases his performances around the classical piano, so there were humorous possibilities.

Later John went to university, which is a good qualification for a jokesmith, and dropped out in his last year, which is better. He then went to work for the Post Office, which promised a rich source of raw material. There were, though, some danger signs. He lent me two Python albums, and never asked for them back.

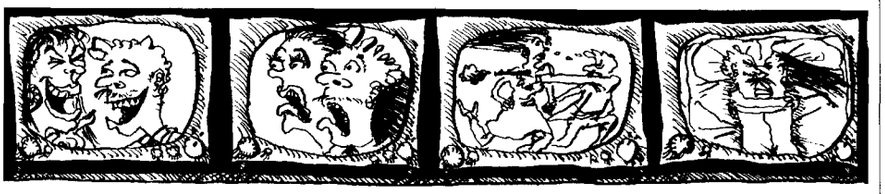
His friend Mark formed a band, with himself as vocalist and Jon as fiddler. They took themselves seriously, writing their own songs and calling themselves The Levellers after the 17th-century proto-socialists.

Having interviewed the producer of Radio 4's *WeekEnding*, I offered Jon her phone number (after all, "nepotism" means looking after your nephew). But he said that he and the band were already on the air, performing for Radio Brighton. They played first as the supporting act, then bigger gigs—with other bands to support *them*. Their record topped the independent label charts.

Having interviewed Rory Bremner, I offered Jon the phone number of his script editor, but the band were off to make a video. It was when their last album, *Levelling the Land*, went straight into the mainstream album charts at 14 that I realised I was fighting a losing battle. When their single, "Fifteen Years", leapt into the Top 20 at 11, I realised I had lost the war. The Levellers are now level-pegging away in the music business.

All is not lost. There's always my son, now well into his teens. He laughs a lot; and he's a natural humorist. I could always introduce him to Michael Palin, whom I interviewed the other week. On the other hand, I could always pack in this career-counselling lark at once.

JACI STEPHEN



Why, oh why, oh why, can't we see more regional programmes on TV? Because they're boring, okay?

Last year's Writers' Guild Awards hit the headlines when John Osborne had to be helped from the stage by Alan Bleasdale and Lynda la Plante. The furore had started when Osborne, increasingly incomprehensible, inspired Barry Took to cross the room, apparently declaring, "I'm going for a piss." It is ironic, therefore, that during Took's after-dinner speech at the Cambridge Television Festival at the weekend, the whole audience felt like doing the same thing. Indeed, it was a pity that Took had not decided to take a piss on this occasion as well. Preferably over the tedious bits of cards he had the audacity to call a speech.

The Royal Television Society's bi-annual conference holds its dinners in King's College, and the Quantum/Flextech fraternity (whoever they might be) had chosen Took as the Saturday-night entertainment. His act, should you continue to have the good fortune to miss it, is to read cuttings from newspapers and letters he has acquired during the years. Largely, pre-Ark in tone and content, they doubtless attract guffaws from men puffing on large cigars in Rotary Club dinners, but on this occasion any laughs there were came only from the top table, where politeness prevailed.

The audience consisted of the brightest and best in British broadcasting, and it was simply insulting to believe, and expect, that they were willing to be fobbed off with what was literally a cuttings job. Lacking in topicality, unfunny and delivered with a degree of self-satisfaction that the material did not warrant, the whole thing was a disgrace and embarrassment to all present. As one delegate noted, "I knew it all by heart—which is more than he did." Incompetence is forgivable, if the unfortunate incompetent has at least made an effort; laziness is not. Mr Took probably thinks of this kind of work as a piece of piss. So, he should note, do the rest of us.

The conference as a whole was less dynamic than the one two years ago, when John Birt was in the chair. Birt may be director-general of the BBC, but he is still an outstanding producer, and the time-keeping and focus he insisted on bringing to every session in 1991 resulted in a much tighter structure and certainly more impressive performances from participants. It is probably not altogether the fault of this year's chairman, Brian Wenham, but the whingeing that always characterises the Edinburgh TV Festival reared its head many times too often at Cambridge. It is essential that the RTS preserve the identity of its conference and stop itself from going down the Edinburgh road.

One solution might be to ban everyone from talking about regional broadcasting. Why, oh why, oh why, goes the cry, can't we see more programmes about the regions on network television. Because they're boring, and Danielle Steel is better, okay? The session titled *The BBC: The Rhetoric and the Reality* turned into a slanging match between the press, Sky's director of programmes, David Elstein, and BBC 1 controller Alan Yentob. The real problem was not these individuals, however, but Channel 4 news presenter Jon Snow, who chaired the discussion.

So keen are interviewers to get one over on the BBC, they go on the attack and keep failing to realise that there are issues to be discussed apart from money. If representatives of the corporation keep being put on the defensive by aggressive behaviour, it is we who will lose out, as they will simply stop making themselves available to us. There are certainly questions to be answered; but there are also answers that need to be heard.

The conference had its good points, however. Sir Christopher Bland, chairman of London Weekend Television Holdings, gave the funniest speech at Friday's dinner that I have ever heard at a TV event. Suddenly, you no longer felt quite so resentful of the £12 million he has made from company shares (this spirit of generosity lasted at least until lunch-time on Saturday).

The best thing to have come out of the conference, however, is my discovery of the perfect diet. It is foolproof, and I guarantee that any woman who follows it will lose weight.

It's called the Denise O'Donaghue diet, and is named after the woman who is the managing director of Hat Trick productions. It is only fair to say, before commenting on her physicality and being accused of sexism, that Ms O'Donaghue is extremely bright and one of the most successful people in the business. But she also has a waist smaller than Barbie's. The secret, she says, is to "eat nothing". Now, whenever a plate of food is offered to me, I say "Denise O'Donaghue" to myself and refuse it.

Next I'm going to try to make money ("Greg Dyke, Greg Dyke") and then make even more money ("Christopher Bland, Christopher Bland"). Pity I'll be too anorexic to go to the bank to pick it up.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

To those born later

BERTOLT BRECHT: JOURNALS 1934-1955
John Willett (editor), translated by Hugh Rorrison
Methuen, £35

Ned Chaillet

How to read this book: this marvellous, motley collage of political ideas, domestic detail, artistic debate, poems, photographs and cuttings from newspapers and magazines, assembled, undoubtedly for posterity, by one of the great writers of the century? There are obvious options. The material is neatly assembled in chronological order, with helpful straplines on each page alerting the reader to Brecht's location in geography and subject-matter.

We can choose to follow him in exile after leaving Hitler's Germany, from Denmark to Finland to the US and back to the Soviet zone of Germany and the long-cherished dream of his own theatre. Or we can dip in and out to chart, for instance, his collaboration with Charles Laughton on the remarkable *Life of Galileo*.

But perhaps the question to be faced now is how to read Bertolt Brecht altogether. No European writer so exactly articulated, in writing and in life, the divisions of this century. Born at the end of the last, in 1898, he lived through the time of two world wars and the Russian Revolution, became a Marxist and then witnessed the Soviet-Nazi pact, and fled to refuge in Los Angeles. The Europe he returned to in 1947, days after appearing before the House Committee on Un-American Activities in Washington, was a shattered landscape which he wished to rebuild for the proletariat, that unfashionable word then as now. He died in 1956, six months after Khrushchev's denunciations of Stalin.

Brecht not only lived these times; he also wrote them. He became a long-standing target of rightist intellectuals, and even sophisticated critics such as Martin Esslin measured his Marxism as his failure. It was, of course, his inspiration.

Minor critics routinely reject his importance when they assess new productions of his plays. Freed to praise an actress as Mother Courage or the music of Kurt Weill, they might enjoy themselves and still knowingly inform us that this is only because a production has overcome Brecht's theories. They will claim that the alienation effect, or the idea of epic theatre, have been dispensed with by the production or by acting that helps us to empathise with the characters.

With the apparent collapse of communism, Brecht is even more of an embarrassment. After all, he opted for the socialist side of the German border, setting up house and theatre in East Berlin and ultimately bringing great cultural prestige to a regime found odious by the western democracies. But the work remains and continues to force attention. His German legacy has been protected first by his wife, Helene Weigel, then by his daughter, Barbara; and from the US his son, Stefan, has promoted the English-language heritage, including the Methuen edition of which these journals are part.

The young Brecht: Rudolf Schlichter's 1926 portrait, from "Realism, Rationalism, Surrealism: art between the wars" by Briony Fer et al (Yale University Press, £14.95)

These are not the first he wrote. From 1920 to 1922, he kept an exuberant youthful record of his enthusiasms and romantic entanglements, his feelings about the women he was impregnating and the plays he was writing. John Willett, in a characteristically lucid and engaging introduction, shows us the limits Brecht had placed on the later journals for fear of "unwelcome readers". They could be anyone from the women in his life to party officials. Even so, everything from an annoyingly flirtatious lover to sharp criticisms of Soviet policy makes its way in. Yet these journals are the thoughts that Brecht wanted displayed, typed by him and preserved.

Public loyalty and private dismay were particular characteristics of Brecht's politics, more informed by Marx's ideas than by political parties. The journals, in Hugh Rorrison's meticulous translation, finally let us into the private thinking, circumscribed as it might be by preparation for posterity.

He used the diary as a way of thinking about what he wrote, how he wrote, why he wrote, and also why we live, how we live; the nature of poetry, the nature of theatre, the nature of politics. Occasionally, he would reveal and comment on emotion. More often, he would record conversations: a first meeting with Clifford Odets; offending Christopher Isherwood by suggesting Hollywood had bought him; urging Leon Feuchtwanger to accept an invitation from the Associated Press to report on the Nuremberg trials; giving advice to his son, Stefan, on the roles of the bourgeoisie and proletariat in history. Sometimes he uses the journals as a genuine workbook, to develop statements about "non-Aristotelian theatre", for example—though simple throw away ideas often reveal more.

"Am considering a little epic work", he remarks, " . . . something in the manner of *Candide* or *Gulliver*." A "little" epic: a phrase like that strips away the associations of Hollywood spectacle, and even the image of Mother Courage trudging through Europe with her wagon. It prepares the reader for Brecht's own perceptions of what he means by epic theatre.

Apart from the progress reports on work such as *Galileo* and casual details about forging his theatrical style, at least in the Berliner Ensemble, history in the making claims the major part of his attention. The journals begin properly in 1938, with Brecht seizing on every item of news about Hitler's policies, and about the later invasion of Poland, to try to comprehend the fate of Europe and of ideology.

There is sometimes a quiet desperation to order the events that led to the second world war, and (within the war itself) to the use of the atom bomb, as if they could be comprehended from news reports. It may well be that the purpose of returning to the diary form, and the increased accumulation of news cuttings over the years, was to test his analysis of history.

That some of his conclusions were pessimistic is only to be expected. The diaries continue long enough for him to disabuse himself of some great expectations. In 1940, he writes that the young men fighting the German cause have known nothing except Nazism in their lives. "The Nazis will liquidate themselves," he notes. When the war is over and he is back in Germany, one of the first horrors he discovers is the sweeping away of guilt for the war on to the Nazi leaders, as if no voter had any responsibility. He would not be surprised by the Germany of 1993.

The "Dark Times" was a phrase used by Brecht in the early years of the journals, and as well as perception and argument there are simple statements that chill. "Walter Benjamin has poisoned himself," he writes, recording the suicide of the writer stopped while fleeing across the Spanish border. Death is everywhere in these pages, but there are also plans for a future society and a future art with a sense of responsibility learned from the past. Learned, indeed, from Marx, as the dialectics of his diaries confirm. But those looking for his humanity will also find it here.

Brecht was a magpie of a writer. He stole at will from great art, whether it was Shakes-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

peare's, Japanese or Chinese. He organised collaborations with lesser- and well-known writers, bent musicians to his vision and learned from theirs. These things he always acknowledged, though they are now used against him in days when competition is preferred to collaboration. The journals, in this elegant and scholarly edition, take us closer to the process of his creation than anything previously published. And, however carefully he guarded his borders, there are revelations everywhere.

Ned Chaillet is a drama producer for BBC radio

Cracks in the high ground

THE EXPENSE OF GLORY: A LIFE OF JOHN REITH
Ian McIntyre
HarperCollins, £20

John Dugdale

In the infallibly absorbing Radio 4 series *Radio Lives*, each much-loved broadcaster in turn is revealed to have had a hidden self at odds with public perception. Jimmy Edwards was gay, Professor C E M Joad was an incorrigible fare-dodger, Nancy Spain was a lesbian who nevertheless had a secret love child. Week by week, the programmes assemble a telling portrait of the God-fearing BBC that Reith built: an organisation peopled, scarcely coincidentally, by wretched repressives obliged to sustain a deceptive, buttoned-up persona whatever the psychological price.

Ian McIntyre's fine biography of John Reith reveals that the Corporation's master-builder imposed the severest repression of all on himself, denying expression to a swarm of drives and emotions at odds with his image as dutiful paterfamilias and selfless Presbyterian public servant.

Not that a disparity between the overt and covert Reith is in itself a fresh discovery; it was the main point of Andrew Boyle's 1972 study, published a year after its subject's death. But McIntyre has had access to the director-general's copious, confessional diaries, permitting a counterpointing of the two selves impossible for his predecessor.

The mandatory kink unveiled in this 450-page Radio Life is the young engineer and soldier's Tennysonian love, between the ages of 23 and 33, for a sweet-faced fellow Glaswegian, Charlie Bowser; a mutual infatuation only terminated, in bitterness, nine months after Reith's marriage and eight months before he joined the infant BBC in 1922. And whereas Boyle, writing while Lady Reith was still alive, was guarded in sketching her husband's nympholeptic leanings, McIntyre is able to deal relatively freely with the ageing Tartuffe's string of seemingly unconsummated obsessions with secretaries and dancing teachers. (Allegations of sexual harassment, advanced in the memoirs of the radio producer Ian Messiter, go unexamined).

Scornfully noting the imbalance of Boyle's book, McIntyre allocates three times as many pages to the years after Reith's departure from the BBC in 1938; a period in which Imperial Airways, a brief spell of wartime government and a couple of postwar quango posts all failed to provide him with opportunities matching his bloated ambitions.

A workaholic forced to dry out, he was reduced to writing job-begging letters to such detested figures as Beaverbrook, Churchill and Attlee; denouncing his BBC successors for the "degradation and prostitution" of their output; contemplating his certain damnation; and devoting 90 per cent of his diary to his latest Platonic paramour. This bizarre amalgam of John Knox, Victor Meldrew and Humbert Humbert is evoked with considerable flair.

Seven decades after his arrival at the BBC, and two decades after his death, British broadcasting is still in the protracted process of liberating itself from John Reith, its founding father and spectral super-ego—just as Reith himself, a son of the manse, began to defy his Calvinist ghosts in his lovesick old age.

At the BBC, his abiding influence is evident in both large matters—the role of the governors, licence-fee funding, the political compromises resulting from governmental control of the purse-strings—and smaller ones; the *Daily Service* on Radio 4, for instance, or the educational goals of programmes as diverse as *The Mating Game* and *Blue Peter*.

His impact on commercial broadcasting in the UK is no less striking. The perceived need to protect the BBC has ensured that, at each stage, inroads into its monopoly have been late—ITV in the 1950s, ILR in the 1970s, Channel 4 and satellite TV in the 1980s, national commercial radio in the 1990s—and invariably policied by neo-Reithian regulatory bodies. Future media historians will surely rub their eyes in astonishment on discovering that, for 70 years, BBC radio faced no British-based, nationwide rival.

The Reithian settlement had two interdependent elements: a lofty notion of the BBC's uniqueness, and the retardation of the advance of commercial competition. With BSkyB earning £2 million profit per week, ITV deregulated and increasingly market-driven, and Classic FM, Virgin and ILR flourishing, the defensive strategy has finally collapsed; while the overtly Christian mission of Reith's BBC (where entertainment programmes were banned on the Sabbath) has been watered-down into John Birt's campaign for secular "distinctiveness".

As the corporation's charter comes up for renewal in 1996, McIntyre's biography—besides vividly depicting a personality as mesmerisingly complex as any hero of 20th-century fiction—is an important tool for those who seek to shape the post-Reithian future.

Travelling hopefully

STRANGE PILGRIMS
Gabriel García Márquez (translated by Edith Grossman)
Jonathan Cape, £14.99

Amanda Hopkinson

"I saw him only once in Boccacio, the popular Barcelona club, a few hours before his miserable death." It takes courage and confidence to open a story thus, and García Márquez clearly had an abundance of both, 20 years ago as now.

This volume of short stories, written mainly during his stays and travels in Europe in the 1970s and early 1980s, provides the eternal outsider's view of the local, often displaced, residents. It has all the necessary García Márquez ingredients of violent death and magical imagination; physical and psychic suffering and conquest; characters of unaccountable spontaneity and inescapable habits, taken across any age and nationality with the same easy felicity.

For García Márquez is, finally, a happy writer. He has refined his style so it no longer needs to sprawl across the vast canvas of *A Hundred Years of Solitude*, and condensed its contents so the reader feels s/he knows people and places intimately from the tiniest vignettes. Often touching, often funny, always unexpected, the experience is as enriching as travel itself. From the simple philosophy that all life is a journey, we are drawn into the encounters García Márquez has made along the way, with no separations between dispassionate observation and virtuoso imagination.

The terms are set by the introduction: a story of the book's genesis no more or less fabulous than the dozen succeeding peregrinations. For this, as his speech on receiving the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1982 elucidated, is García Márquez's starting point. Truth is stranger than fiction, history than myth, reality than fantasy. Having mysteriously lost the notebook containing several dozens of outlined short stories, he returned to reacquaint himself with Barcelona and Madrid, Paris and Bordeaux, Rome and Geneva in preparation for this recapitulation of his literary past. "Not one [place] had any connection to my memories. Through an astonishing inversion, all of them, like present-day Europe, had become strange: true memories seemed like phantoms, while false memories were so convincing that they replaced reality. This meant I could not detect the dividing line between disillusion and nostalgia."

It takes courage to resituate a kind of *Canterbury Tales* outside the fashionable alternatives in eastern and central Europe. Courage, also, to revert to death as the only common destination, and to the tension between mak-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing sense and life's absurdities in our daily pilgrimage.

And it's always writing dangerously to attack the (un)holy trinity of love, life and death by expressing tenderness without sentiment, passion without drama, humour without hilarity or satire. There's not a trace of the sexy saleability said to guarantee bestseller status. García Márquez is master of the unfashionable virtues, retaining a delicacy and intimacy with his characters.

It's as invidious to pick favourites from among the *Strange Pilgrims* as from any anthology of fairy stories. Here are all the familiar ingredients: clairvoyant dreams and ill winds; a princess's finger pricked by a rose and a body that won't decompose; a sleeping beauty and an incarcerated "madwoman". Overall, García Márquez writes better on women than men, strangers than natives, cities than countrysides. But this is to pick on marginal details.

Suffice to say that the sequence is also important, starting with the last voyage of an exiled president to his native Antilles; travelling by way of children creating their own "secret garden" indoors and the twilight years of a "lady of the night"; taking in the pink kneecaps of 17 inexplicably poisoned Englishmen; and closing with perhaps the strongest story in the collection. This is a triumph of true naivity over urbane sophistication, and love over reason, with never a hint of cynicism in the supremely simple telling.

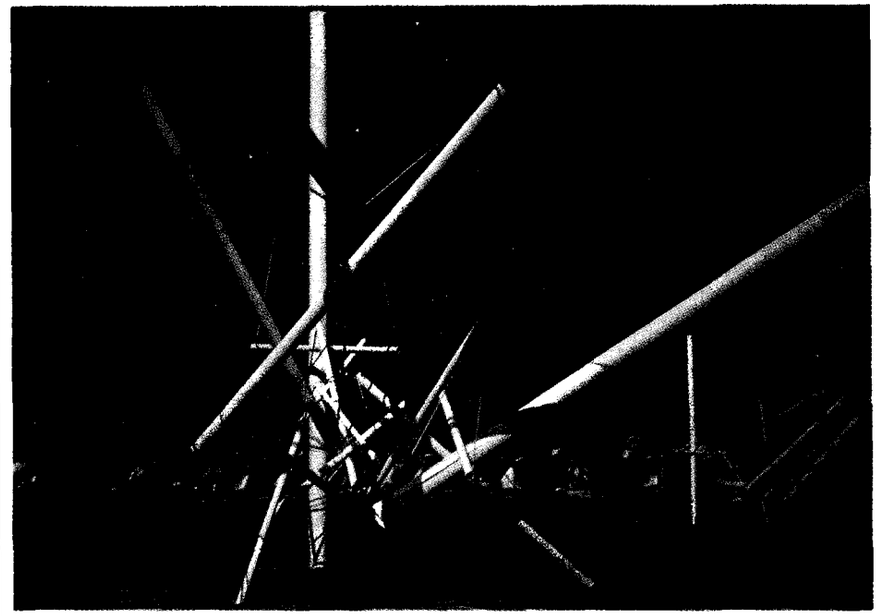
Future shlock

VIRTUAL LIGHT
William Gibson
Viking, £14.99
TERMINAL IDENTITY: THE VIRTUAL SUBJECT IN POSTMODERN SCIENCE FICTION
Scott Bukatman
Duke University Press, £15.95 paperback/£55 hardback

David V Barrett

Popular mythology would have it that William Gibson created cyberpunk fiction almost single-handedly (with some help from Bruce Sterling), and that his 1984 novel *Neuromancer* broke new ground to establish a sub-genre all on its own. Of course, something akin to cyberpunk was being written decades ago: Alfred Bester's *Tiger! Tiger!* (1956) is the most-touted example, but some of Samuel R Delany's and William Burroughs' work fulfils many of the relevant criteria. Gibson didn't even invent the label. But as with all art movements, mythology is more important than mere facts. So William Gibson *is* the father of cyberpunk.

When I interviewed him in 1988, Gibson said: "I'm pigeonholed to the extent that if I write something with a certain sort of socio-economic leverage, it's going to be hard to get away from the label." So how does *Virtual Light* fit in with what went before? In some ways it's cyberpunk, with very little of the cyber. All the other ingredients are here: the Japanese-dominated Pacific Coast of America, the protagonists' sleazy gutter life, the hip speak, the society split into the very wealthy and the underpeople.



Virtual sculpture-park: "Forest Devils' Moon Light", a computer-generated "installation" by Kenneth Snelson, one of the hi-tech creations in "Art of the Electronic Age" by Frank Popper (Thames & Hudson, £24.95)

The story is a lot more straightforward than Gibson's previous novels. Failed cop Berry Rydell is sent to San Francisco to track down a pair of "virtual light" glasses, stolen by a bicycle messenger called Chevette who lives in a hut tacked on top of a tower of the Golden Gate Bridge. This is the novel's most powerful setting: a sprawling, three-dimensional shanty-town that has grown since the building of a tunnel beneath.

Rydell is working for a freelance outfit on behalf of IntenSecure, a private security company that turns out to be much more powerful—and unpleasant—than he thought. The glasses are so important because they contain plans for the redevelopment of San Francisco, which must not fall into the wrong (or right) hands. Which side should Rydell be on? And should he arrest Chevette or rescue her? The characterisation is good, there's lots of running, a few shoot-outs, a few surprises and some nicely understated romance.

In other words, this is a near-future thriller in a cyberpunk setting. According to Scott Bukatman in *Terminal Identity*, the sort of SF that includes cyberpunk is the true expression of life in our postmodern society.

It might be assumed that his book would be a critical analysis of the sub-genre, but Bukatman spends more time on William Burroughs, J G Ballard and Philip K Dick, and on films such as *Blade Runner*, *TRON*, and *Videodrome* than he does on Gibson, Sterling and the other cyberpunk writers. As an academic study it suffers from having too little to say at too great a length, polysyllabically, and much of that simply reshuffles quotes by previous critics.

Bukatman misses cyberpunk's two fundamental sociological flaws. One is its insistence on the closeness, the integration, of man and computer, when simple observation of real life reveals the alienation most of us feel because of our increasing dependence on the damn things. The other is its assumption that there are only two classes: the extremely rich and powerful haves, and the downtrodden gutter-dwellers.

Gibson encapsulates it in *Virtual Light*: "There's only but two kinds of people. People can afford hotels like that, they're one kind. We're the other. Used to be, like, a middle class, people in between. But not anymore." Life just ain't like that, and won't be in the foreseeable future, despite the best attempts of Thatcherism to polarise society.

Then what is the significance of cyberpunk? "Although the movement ended almost as soon as it began," says Bukatman, "leaving a motley assortment of short stories and novels, its impact has been felt, and its techniques absorbed, across a range of media and cultural formations". Which is really what Gibson has done in *Virtual Light*, using some of the tropes of what very quickly became a tired sub-genre as background for a nicely written but hardly earth-shattering thriller.

Gibson once said: "If I had any advice for the entry-level SF writer, it's for God's sake don't write anything that can remotely be called cyberpunk." Too many poor formulaic imitations took his created world as given, tacking on top yet another cod-American detective story: "Down these mean gutters . . ." If Gibson has now done this himself, the difference is that it's his world, and he always could write well.

David V Barrett is administrator and chairman of the judges for the Arthur C Clarke award for science fiction

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Radical chic

LOVE FROM NANCY: THE LETTERS OF NANCY MITFORD
Charlotte Mosley (editor)
Hodder & Stoughton, £20

Janet Barron

Evelyn Waugh, one of Nancy Mitford's most frequent correspondents, suggested that as she was living in postwar Paris, she might try her hand at a "news from elsewhere" column. Nancy replied in a tone of teasing self-deprecation that "social gossip is not my strong point". *Love from Nancy* amounts to more than 500 pages of precisely that, in the thousands of letters she wrote throughout her life.

There are some wonderful anecdotes of the high society that was her natural habitat. Unlike most of her family, she saw the dangers of Nazism, satirising Oswald Mosley, though maintaining a deep affection for Diana Mosley, her sister. She was delighted at the Labour landslide of 1945, though felt a little sorry for Churchill. "Meanwhile Winston has got a pet bird," she observes, "& thinks of nothing else, it sits drinking whiskey with him and makes messes all over the official documents."

Lady Redesdale, Nancy's mother, wistfully remarked that whenever she saw a tabloid headline containing the banner "Peer's Daughter", it was likely to be another Mitford girls' scandal. Unity, another sister, tried to shoot herself and was brought back to England on a special Nazi train as an honoured friend of Adolf Hitler. Of all the Mitford family, as Nancy reflected, only she and Tom were doing any war work. Her husband, from whom she was soon estranged, was cynically considering a career as a civil servant if the country fell to German occupation.

Nancy's life, for all its surface gaiety, was a sad one. Her desire for a child was never fulfilled and, after an affair with a French officer, her hopes were finally dashed when she suffered an ectopic pregnancy. Instead, she threw herself into her writing, commenting defensively once that she would rather lose a baby than a manuscript. Her novels and her journalism brought in most of her money, so that she could write and plead to her unfaithful lover, Gaston Palewski, that her "darling Colonel" could have £1,000 if he would only come and see her. The unreciprocated love story is touching rather than pathetic, interspersed with gleeful pages in which she gloats over Dior gowns and the lucky find of a Guerlain lipstick in an obscure chemist.

Charlotte Mosely's editing is admirable, for the task is immense. She has cut many of the repetitions, and one of the absorbing features of the volume is watching friendships unfold. For all her wit, Nancy is rarely nasty. She seems to feel genuine benevolence, sometimes presented in the voice of a *faux naive*. Finding herself working with shop-girls and milliners, she is astonished to find them envious of her friendships with Evelyn Waugh and Cyril Connolly.

Robert Capa's view of the liberation of Paris; in the paperback edition of "In Our Time: the world as seen by Magnum photographers", with text by William Manchester and Jean Lacouture (André Deutsch, £19.99): a breathtaking pictorial history of 20th-century politics, society and culture

"It would amuse you," she wrote to Diana, "in the office where I work the girls are 2 actresses, one ex-hat shop asistant & one wholesale agent. Well I suppose they are *New Statesman* fans or something . . . Peter Quennell and Eddy Sackville-West & others I shd have thought utterly (outside their own circle) obscure," would not, she thought, be pleased to know that "it seems they are household words to the middle classes".

The war seemed, in its early stages, to be a glamorous affair, with champagne receptions and an endless round of lunches. London, she thought, was beautiful in the blackout, and life seemed much as usual while she still had her dogs and servants. But when the Blitz began, she began to feel despair and her letters are an eloquent account of the experience of living with incessant bombings. She became ill through lack of food, and England was like a prison; her foreign holidays now seemed a distant golden age.

When the war was over, Nancy moved to Paris to be near her neglectful lover. She fell in love with the city, alive with the heady scents of recovery. She lived cheaply, rationing her spending and living in cheap hotels. This bohemianism evidently appealed to her. For the first time she was free of her family, and her journalism flourished without friends' censorship. Some of her assignments were bizarrely inappropriate: *Lilliput* magazine commissioned an article on slimming, when her main problem was always being chronically underweight. Like, the true professional she was, Nancy wrote it anyway and accepted the fee to buy something *chic*.

The image of Nancy Mitford that emerges from this volume is not of the spoiled debutante I expected. Her concern for her family and friends is always evident, and she writes with an infectious sense of joy. Wherever she set pen to paper, it was always from Nancy with love.

Janet Barron is writing a history of the suffragette movement for Little, Brown

Head cases

HARMLESS LOVERS?: GENDER, THEORY AND PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS
Mike Gane
Routledge, £12.99 paperback/£40 hardback

David Herman

Recently it has been open season on the private lives of intellectuals. First came Louis Althusser's posthumously published account of how he murdered his wife and his lifelong fight with madness. Then Roland Barthes' stories—also published posthumously—of picking up young men in North Africa and Paris. *Three* biographies of Foucault, including James Miller's *The Passion of Michel Foucault*, with its tales of homosexuality, suicide attempts and SM. Now it's Einstein's turn to be dragged through the mud. Sensationalism sells. Sex and madness sell best.

Mike Gane's book, then, could hardly be more timely. *Harmless Lovers?* is about sex: what leading 19th-century thinkers—from Mary Wollstonecraft to Durkheim and Nietzsche—thought about sexuality and gender, and how their theories were influenced by their own experience. As the Routledge publicist drools: "How did male theorists actually behave with their wives and lovers?"

At first glance this sounds like an updated version of Paul Johnson's lively sneer-job, *Intellectuals*, which used the private lives of leading left intellectuals to discredit them as thinkers. Actually, Gane's book, as one might expect from his previous work on Baudrillard, Durkheim and Mauss, is both more and less interesting than Routledge suggests.

It is *less* interesting for a number of reasons. First, it is not very well written. Anyone expecting a racy read from the author of *Ideological Representations and Power in Social Relations* is just being perverse. But worse, it is a dull read, full of jargon and aimed at the usual audience of feminist theorists, sociologists and "theory heads". Take this: "Thus the totemic complex also entails a subordination of the principle of mechanical solidarity through likenesses to that of organic solidarity through differences and hierarchy, though Durkheim hesitates to announce this reversal." Why do people write like this? And why do publishers print it?

It is less interesting for another reason. The book is not really about these thinkers' private lives at all. The two longest chapters—almost half the book—have no biographical content to speak of. And though there are

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

intriguing moments (Schopenhauer throwing a woman down a flight of stairs because her talking had disturbed his thinking; Marx's moving love letter to his wife) the biographical material is thin and second-hand. I doubt you will come away from this book with a radically changed image of the inner lives of Marx, Engels, Mill or Nietzsche.

Crucially, Gane does not make the case that underpins the whole book: that the private lives of these (mostly male) thinkers profoundly shaped the way they thought about gender. Does the life explain the work? How much does biography tell you about anyone's intellectual creativity? Gane does not really take on these questions. There is a tendency here, as in so many of these other books, to read "private life" as sex, marriage, love-life: a peculiarly narrow way of thinking.

The absence of Freud from *Harmless Lovers?* is telling. It symbolises the absence of a Freudian way of thinking about people and their inner lives that is at the hollow centre of this book. Gane says that "this book is certainly influenced by psychoanalysis," but it is psychoanalysis as offered by certain kinds of French theory. He is more at home with poststructuralist readings of Nietzsche than with anything that looks remotely like one human being trying to make sense of the life of another.

In other ways, however, the book is more interesting than the blurb suggests. It is *not* sensationalist, but a serious attempt to take on a rich subject. It places gender at the centre of the history of sociology. Gane goes beyond easy stereotypes of Victorian sexuality to show the complexity of 19th-century thinking about gender. He does not overlook social and cultural contexts. Best of all, he shows that ideas do not just emerge fully-formed from the study or the library. For all its dryness and jargon, *Harmless Lovers?* is a useful corrective to the emerging bodice-ripper school of intellectual biography.

David Herman works for The Late Show

Alien Quorn

FOXHUNTING IN PARADISE
Michael Clayton
John Murray, £19.99

Jonathan Sale

Deuced funny title for a chap to think up, *Foxhunting in Paradise*. Is it what we in the writin', shootin' and fishin' fraternity call "irony", implying that Paradise used to be paradisal until some toffs started chasing foxes? Is it like *Swimming to Cambodia*?

No, Michael Clayton, editor of *Horse and Hound*, really does believe that Leicestershire is a dead ringer for the Garden of Eden. Before the Fall, that is—as opposed to falls, of which you expect a vast number in the home of the Belvoir (pronounced Beever) and Quorn (pronounced Kworn) hunts. I could say that this is another *Memoirs of a Foxhunting Man*: except that it isn't, being more of a slightly foxed version of "Jennifer's Diary" crammed with "charming" and "redoubtable" wives.

And Clayton, despite having served his time with 200 separate hunts, is no Siegfried Sassoon. He can devote a quarter of a page to a list of place-names: Horbling, Carlton Scroop, Wartnaby, Freeby and other spots where hounds meet for the kick-off.

But lurking in the covert is a serious point. Foxhunting raises a crucial issue of conservation. Is it right to persecute a threatened species that is losing its traditional habitat and shows little sign of adapting to a changing environment? Surely our countryside cannot afford to see yet another denizen of our landscape headed down the bridleway signposted "Extinction"? The creature doesn't really enjoy being attacked, does it?

The endangered species is, of course, the British hunting man. Gone are the days of Hugo Meynell, the "Father of Foxhunting", who moved house about the country as the lure of the chase dictated. "Cork Leg" Jones, who kept mislaying his false limb all over the Shires, went to his happy hunting-grounds long ago. Even Asil Nadir has sold his estate in these parts.

No one actually goes out to cull huntsmen to keep their numbers down. But their tribes are harassed, according to Clayton, by councils that insist on leaving sewage farms exactly where a chap wants to gallop and by farmers who insist on ploughing up fields that would be much more rideable as grass. Even less hoof-friendly, for some reason, is the "set-aside" terrain. Greenpeace surely ought to raise the issue with Brussels.

Communication is another problem. You will know that "hunting pink" is translated into English as "red" but could you give a precise definition of the "hooroosh" of the chase? "Tally-ho" is familiar but we would be baffled by one of the quaint cries of the Quorn: "Huic! huic! huic! Yoo-oi! At him there, old bitches! Yo-oi!"

The old bitches in question, incidentally, are understood not to include Mrs Ursula "Urky" Newton or Ulrika Murray Smith, who once heard Philip Cantrell-Hubbersty say something terribly amusing to Teddy Bouskell-Wade. But this brings up the sad question of reproduction. Huntpersons are not mating as they used to. If you ride too close to what you hope is a-bit-on-the-sidesaddle, you risk a spurred boot up your hindquarters. Hunting horns do not attract the horny.

It does not help that huntsmen, like salmon voyaging to their spawning-grounds, have such a long trek to eager-Belvoir country. The sad truth is that "Comparatively few hunters settle permanently in Leicestershire." Others, it seems, emigrate there like swallows for the winter or, if pushed, drive in twice a week from their nature reserves on new housing estates in the Midlands. Some even have jobs which, scandalously, mean that they can only go huntin' on a Saturday. Still, the recession should do something about that.

PRINTOUT

Out of line

Boyd Tonkin

In the new issue of Modern Painters, William Boyd publishes a revealing defence of Graham Sutherland that argues for "the primacy of the line in art". In Boyd's own realm of fiction, for line, read plot and character: the shapes that make or mar the orthodox novel, whatever its shading of symbol or concept. It's as a "line" specialist that Boyd flourishes. His books spice the old narrative virtues with exotic locales and a mildly modernist flavour drawn from recent culture, science and politics. The results give post-imperial English writing its nearest equivalent to Somerset Maugham.

Boyd's sixth novel, "The Blue Afternoon" (Sinclair-Stevenson, £14.99), serves much of the mixture as before, but hints that the chef is tiring. As a period fiction—a whodunit, love story and slice of intellectual history—it creates a near-perfect illusion that its author wilfully spoils.

The framing tale features Kay Fischer, a tough-cookie architect in 1930s Los Angeles. Her Bauhaus-style designs for "a cool world with clean edges" are ruined by the arrival of Dr Carriscant, a dapper wrinkly who claims to be her father. Cut to the US-ruled Philippines of 1902, where Carriscant's career as a go-ahead surgeon fighting the dinosaurs of medical Manila is blown off course by a storm of irrational events. He falls in love, wildly and adulterously, and comes under suspicion of murder. Meanwhile, in another "step into the void", a colleague plans to win the prize for the first powered flight.

Back in the 1930s, Carriscant takes Kay to Lisbon in a bid to knit his life's loose ends together. But Boyd cussedly refuses to deliver the symmetry we expect from such a pro. He has always looked with curiosity at skills that match the novelist's power to reflect, arrange or flout the real: film-making in "The New Confessions", for example, or zoology in "Brazzaville Beach". Here, the characters' obsessive dreams of improving on brute nature seize control of the plot. There's Kay, the minimalist who corrals "blocks of air" into pure forms; Dr Quiroga, the pioneer aviator with a machine that snubs gravity; and Carriscant himself, who cheats death with the latest operations.

This concern for crafts that tamper with reality exposes the doubts of a deft story-teller who frets about his role as mimic and conjuror. Not that the novel reads like a navel-gazing treatise: we can bask in its tropical sensuality and relish its arcane lore of surgery and aeronautics. Still, that fudged ending looks oddly like a fit of pique. The master of line has chosen to botch his job. "With trust," thinks Carriscant, doctor and liar, "all duplicity becomes simple". So is Boyd getting bored with his readers' trust?

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

Copy Deadlines
Lineage – Friday preceding publication date
Display advertising copy to be set – Monday noon, week of publication
Camera ready artwork – Tuesday, week of publication

Classified Rates:
Standard Rate: £18.00 per s.c.c., Voluntary Organisations: 40% discount
Lineage Rates: 80p per word (inc. VAT, minimum 20 words)
Box No. £4.00
All advertisements subject to VAT at 17.5%

Classified Advertisement Department
New Statesman & Society, Foundation House,
Perseverance Works, 38 Kingsland Road, London E2 8DQ.
Telephone: 071-739 1645. Fax 071-739 9307

APPOINTMENTS

NUJ
NATIONAL UNION OF JOURNALISTS

REGIONAL ORGANISER (SCOTLAND)
SALARY: £25,482

The NUJ has a vacancy for a Regional Organiser in Scotland. The person appointed will be based in Glasgow and will be responsible to the General Secretary for recruitment, negotiation and services to the Scottish membership. Considerable travel is involved and a car is provided. A minimum of 5 years active trade union experience lay or full-time is required.

Application forms and further details are available from Margaret Palmer, Office Manager, NUJ, Acorn House, 314 Grays Inn Road, London WC1X 8DP.

Closing date for receipt of applications is Monday October 18 1993.

The NUJ is an equal opportunity employer.

VOLUNTEER NEEDED

Liberty

Fascinating research job for person with database experience. Suit applicants with interest in 20th century British History. Lunch allowance/travelling expenses within London. **Contact Marie Ryan, Director of Communications, Liberty, 21 Tabard Street, London SE1 4LA (071-403 3888).**

SUPPORT THE ARTS!

The National Campaign for the Arts is the "one strong champion" for the arts (see page 33). This autumn the arts are in crisis with £5 million cuts planned and the Arts Council threatening to close regional theatres and London orchestras.

JOIN THE NCA NOW. Support the arts and get special offers from our member arts organisations. £15 per year (£10 concessions).

Volunteers also needed for telephone reception, word-processing, mailings, book-keeping; data entry etc.

Contact the National Campaign for the Arts, Francis House, Francis Street, London SW1P 1DE (071-828 4448).

NATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR THE ARTS

SCOTTISH trade union review

The ***Scottish Trade Union Review*** is a bi-monthly magazine supported by the STUC General Council

Issue Number 59 includes:
John Sheldon, NUCPS, on Civil Service Jobs for Sale;
Igor Yourgens, GCTU, on Russia in Turmoil;
Lee Conrad, IBM Workers United on Unionising IBM;
and **Ian Bell**, Scotland's Columnist of the Year

PLUS Diary by 'The Clype', News and Views, Low Pay Report, 'Parliamentary Road' column, International Report, Legal Briefing, Letters and four pages of facts in the Statistical Section

Normally £7 per year, SPECIAL OFFER £5 per year (including postage)

Order from: STUR Ltd, Dept of Economics, Glasgow Caledonian University, Cowcaddens Road, GLASGOW G4 0BA

Cheques payable to STUR Ltd

EVENTS

HACKNEY EMPIRE 3RD OCT

WITH: LARRY ADLER ARNOLD BROWN JULIE CHRISTIE BEN COLEMAN JULIE COVINGTON PAUL EDDINGTON PAUL FOOT RIVKA GOTTLEIB NICK LAIRD-CLOWES ROGER LLOYD PACK CHRISTOPHER LOGUE NEIL MCARTHUR HAROLD PINTER PATRICIA SCOTT MARK STEEL ARTHUR SMITH JENNY STOLLER JANET SUZMAN RICHARD WILSON SUSANNAH YORK BENJAMIN ZEPHANIAH MIKE ROSEN Directed by HILARY WESTLAKE

BOX OFFICE: 081 985 2424

FREE MORDECHAI VANUNU

ISRAEL'S FIRST NUCLEAR HOSTAGE ▒ KIDNAPPED ROME 30TH SEPTEMBER 1986
SENTANCED TO 18 YEARS IMPRISONMENT ▒ NOW IN 7TH YEAR OF SOLITARY CONFINEMENT

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CONFERENCES/MEETINGS

Northern College and Ruskin College

Renewing the links: Trade Unions and the Labour Party

Chair: **Professor Lewis Minkin**

Speakers: **Tom Sawyer (UNISON)**
Diana Jeuda (USDAW)

at the

OLD SHIP HOTEL, BRIGHTON

on

Sunday 26 September 1993
9.00pm to 11.00pm
Light Buffet and Bar Available

NORTHERN COLLEGE

RUSKIN COLLEGE OXFORD

UNAUTHORISED POLITICAL BIOGRAPHY

A Discussion led by:
BEN PIMLOTT & PAUL ROUTLEDGE

TUESDAY 12th OCTOBER 7.30pm

INFO: 071-359 3699

THE BOOKSHOP ISLINGTON GREEN
76 UPPER STREET, ISLINGTON, LONDON N1 0NU

FORTHCOMING – Ronan Bennett on the "Troubles" 19th October 7.30pm

ANNOUNCEMENT

msf
MANUFACTURING · SCIENCE · FINANCE

LONDON REGION

MSF CONFERENCE POLICY on LABOUR PARTY LINKS

- maintain participation of trade unions in the election of the party leadership and NEC of the Labour Party
- representation of the local trade union branches, co-operative parties and affiliates at every stage in the selection of parliamentary candidates by CLPs
- representation of the trade unions, co-operative parties and affiliates at local, regional and national level
- the continued exercise of the block vote by the trade unions in accord with their rules, and specifically the voting strength should not be allowed to fall below 50% of the total conference vote

Please mention New Statesman & Society when replying to advertisements

New opportunity for justice?

Child Poverty Action Group
ANNUAL CONFERENCE
1993

CHILD POVERTY ACTION GROUP

A conference to set a social and economic agenda to challenge the injustice of poverty.

SATURDAY 6 NOVEMBER 1993, 10am–4.30pm
London Voluntary Sector RESOURCE CENTRE, 356 Holloway Road, London N7 6PA

The government is currently reviewing its public spending budget with social security firmly on the agenda. The Commission on Social Justice is reviewing the tax and benefits systems as part of its wider agenda of meeting the principles of social justice. At this year's annual conference CPAG takes up the challenge to ensure poverty is at the top of all agendas.

Speakers confirmed so far:
GORDON BORRIE, Chair of the Commission on Social Justice
EITHNE MCLAUGHLIN, Lecturer in Social Policy, Queen's University of Belfast
PAUL JOHNSON, Economist, Institute for Fiscal Studies
SUE SLIPMAN, Director, National Council for One Parent Families
FRAN BENNETT, Freelancer (former CPAG Director)
GERISON LANSDOWNE, Director, Children's Rights Development Unit
RICHARD CLEMENTS, Director, Basic Income Group

The CHILD POVERTY ACTION GROUP is a national charity which aims to ensure that families on low incomes get the most out of their rights to existing welfare benefits – and that, in the longer term, changes are made to bring about a society free from poverty for all families.

If you wish to support CPAG or get involved in its campaigning activities, please write for further information to:

CHILD POVERTY ACTION GROUP, 1-5 BATH STREET, LONDON EC1V 9PY. Tel: 071-253 3406.

Charity No. 29484

REGISTRATION FORM

Please register me for the CPAG 'New opportunity for justice' conference

Name . . . . . .

Address . . . . . .

. . . . . .

Postcode . . . . . .

representing . . . . . organisation (if applicable)

Tel No: Day . . . . . Evening . . . . . .

REGISTRATION FEES

CPAG MEMBERS **£18** (including each individual from member organisations)

NON-CPAG MEMBERS **£23** UNWAGED **£5.00** LUNCH **£5.00**

I enclose a £ . . . . . registration fee **£** . . . . . for lunch

AND **£** . . . . . DONATION towards CPAG's work

TOTAL £ . . . . . .

Cheques made payable to 'CPAG'.

FREE CRECHE FACILITIES **DISABLED ACCESS**

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO: CONFERENCE ORGANISER, NEW OPPORTUNITY FOR JUSTICE, CPAG, 4TH FLOOR, 1-5 BATH STREET, LONDON EC1V 9PY

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Heartsearch

FEMINIST WOMAN, fifties, heterosexual, socialist, seeks slightly inebriate female friend/s to enjoy opera, galleries etc, occasional fun weekends with good food, wine (my house), perhaps holidays. Herts/London. Box (132) 666.

ENVIRONMENTALIST, mid-40s, retains most faculties, interested in politics, culture and ideas, seeks London woman 30-45, similar interests, for companionship maybe leading to romance. Box (132) 667.

RESPONDENTS to Box (121)614, 9/7–9/16/93: must have mailing address, cost prohibits murmuring C.V. details over international phone links. Thanks to all.

LONDON WOMAN, friends describe as pretty, stylish, witty, wishes to meet reasonably achieved mature man 40+. Shared tastes not as vital as shared values, but I'm in publishing, like music, classical to jazz (pre 1947), languages, travel, Stephen Covey's books, to give a clue. Box (132) 668.

SADDER BUT WISER Male, forty-something, survived, just, midlife crises, seeks female friend to inspire, stimulate. Please write to Box (131) 662.

ROLE REVERSAL: Male (64), retired, solvent, educated unencumbered: seeks lady (50/60s) in suburban rural scene. Will provide all domestic (and more) support in exchange for affection/direction. Box (130) 661.

PROFESSIONAL MALE. 40, slim presentable humorous seeks witty intellectual woman 35/45 who loves art (especially modern art) and/or cinema for cultural outings and relaxed conversations in restaurants leading to friendship/romance. A fondness for theatre/philosophy/country walks/skiing would be a bonus. Box (129) 659.

GOODBYE WALL, Farewell Rock, Hell Box – cheerful Sue Valentine seeks happy, amusing, mid-life man to spoil and be spoilt. Box (132) 669.

GENUINELY YOUTHFUL fiftysomething man, fit, slim and optimisitc, articulate, communicative and civilised, enjoys work and play, seeks wise and graceful woman to share as much as possible, with occasional trips to Edinburgh Festival, mainland Greece, South India etc. Please write Box (132) 670.

Tuition

CREATIVE WRITING SEMINARS. Weekly. Small group. NW1. Details 071 482 0699.

Gifts

A BIRTHDATE NEWSPAPER. Original and complete. Superb presentation. Freephone 0800 906609.

Work wanted

WELL-INFORMED WOMAN (50), international specialist weeklies and human rights background, all editorial and office skills. Seeks rewarding job. Box (132) 671.

Property to let

GEORGIAN HOUSE Barnsbury N1. To share with film maker/writer. Own bedroom/study. Suit journalist/writer/tv producer etc. £105 per week inclusive bills and Council Tax. 071 607 2164.

Volunteers

FULL-TIME VOLUNTEER required at a hostel for men recovering from alcohol/drug abuse. 5 days/week day shifts: £55/week; accommodation possible for male applicants. Women welcome to apply. Ring 071 431-1225.

COLOURED POSTCARDS OF
VIETNAM
Five scenes each 20p.
any five 75p + 30p p&p
from: M. METHLEY,
22 BARNACK AVENUE,
COVENTRY CV3 6LA
Cheques payable to: MSAVLC
(Registered charity:
Medical & Scientific Aid for Vietnam)

Specialist Holidays

GREEK ISLE: Holistic holidays and writer's workshops. Free colour brochure. Skyros. 071-284 3065.

Books/Publications

LOBSTER 26, Crosier, Pinay Circle, M15 now available £2.25. 135 School Street, Netherthong, Huddersfield HD7 2YB. Sub. four issues £8.00 cheques payable S. Dorril.

WORLD-WIDE out-of-print service founded 1948. Phone 081-876 7254 (24-hours). Hammersmith Books, High Street, London SW13 9LR.

FORTRESS EUROPE The new Europe is being shaped in secret by ministers and civil servants working outside the EC's democratic structures. It means clampdowns on refugees, undercover surveillance, and uncontrolled exchange of "intelligence" by the continent's police and security forces.

Only one journal keeps abreast of all these developments. *Fortress Europe,* published simultaneously in five European cities, carries news and comment from across the continent. At only £10 for ten issues a year (£30 for institutions), it represents astonishingly good value. For a free sample copy, or to take out a subscription, write to Fortress Europe, 125 Stonhouse StreeL London SW4 6BH.

Meetings

SHAW SOCIETY. Francis Bywater on "G.K.C. and G.B.S." Friday 1st October. Joint meeting with the Chesterton Society. Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, Holborn. 7pm.

Unwanted

TERRAPIN, 5 inch, 5 year-old (plus tank) seeks loving owner. An ideal companion for those long winter evenings. Please call Gareth on 071 739 3211.

Defence Fund News

NEW STATESMAN "Don't Think . . . Don't be surprised" and "Libel Tour" T-shirts are available in black, XL size. £7.99 plus £1 p&p from the Defence Fund. See page 3.

VOLUNTEERS needed to join Defence Fund team. £5 paid for lunch and travel. Contact Nicola, tel: 071-739 3211.

MUSIC HALL entertainment and traditional 3-course dinner at "New Statesman Knees Up" on Friday, 15 October at Brick Lane Music Hall, London E1. Tickets £20. Book now on 071-739 3211.

BOX NUMBERS

1. When replying to box numbers, write box no. at top left hand corner of envelope, and check carefully that you are replying to the box no. you want!
2. Replies to box nos are forwarded every Friday.
3. Please ensure you have included the correct payment for ads.
4. Send to Classified Dept., New Statesman & Society, Foundation House, Perseverance Works, 38 Kingsland Road, London E2 8DQ.
5. Letters can be monitored if written authorisation is provided.

LINEAGE BOOKING FORM

Heartsearch half price!

You can now reach more than 100,000 readers every week with a small advertisement in New Statesman & Society. If you need to promote meetings, property, holidays, services, or if you simply want to meet a soulmate through Heartsearch, then send us the completed coupon with your remittance.

Heartsearch only, 40p per word (min 20 words) incl. VAT
All other ads 80p per word (min 20 words) incl. VAT
Box Numbers £4 extra

Copy date: Friday, prior to publication on the following Friday.

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

.....

No. of weeks ..... **Remittance** .....

or charge my Access/Visa/Barclaycard No:

AD TEXT (BLOCK CAPS) or use separate sheet .....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Post coupon to: Classified Department, New Statesman & Society, Freepost, London E2 8BR

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NEW STATESMAN & SOCIETY

24 September 1993 Vol 6 No 271
New Statesman Vol 122 No 4153
New Society Vol 89 No 1594

ISSN 0954-2361
Incorporating "Marxism Today", "The Nation", "The Athenaeum", and the "Week-end Review"

© Statesman and Nation Publishing Company Ltd and Contributors
Foundation House
Perseverance Works
38 Kingsland Road
London E2 8DQ
Fax 071-739 9307
Advertising 071-739 1645
Editorial/Administration 071-739 3211

Editor Steve Platt
Deputy Editor Paul Anderson
Assistant Editors Vicky Hutchings, Kirsty Milne
Books, Arts and Media Editor Boyd Tonkin
Art Editor Susan Head
Production/Art Assistant Pat Sampson
Chief Sub Editor Linda Coffey
Production Manager Jill Chisholm
Editorial Assistants Terri Natale, Alida Campbell
Political Editor Sarah Baxter
Writers Sean French, Nyta Mann

Ad Manager Jenny Shramenko
Advertising Paul Evans, Paul Stringfellow
Subscriptions Marc Bridle
Office Manager Lee Charles
Chairman Duncan Campbell
Chief Executive Pat Coyne

Individual Subscription Rates: UK £68; Airspeed Europe (inc Eire) £78; USA $130; Canada CS160; Airspeed outside Europe and USA £86; Airmail: USA $185; Canada CS230; Zone 1 £102; Zone 2 £120. Special offers to new subscribers may also be available.

New Statesman & Society will only consider unsolicited material with an sae. Please keep a copy of anything sent, as we cannot be held responsible for its safety.

Syndication/Permissions: Cover Stories, The Observer Ltd, Chelsea Bridge House, Queenstown Road, London SW8 4NN. Tel: 071-350 3272/071-350 3208. Fax: 071-627 5570.
New Statesman & Society (ISSN 0954-2361 USPS 382260) is published weekly for US$120 per year by Statesman and Nation Publishing Company Ltd and Contributors, Foundation House, Perseverance Works, 38 Kingsland Road, London E2 8DQ, UK. Second-class postage paid at Middlesex, NJ, USA. Postmaster: send address changes to New Statesman & Society, c/o C & C Mailers International Inc, 900 Lincoln Boulevard, P O Box 177, Middlesex, NJ 08846, USA.

Registered as a newspaper.
Colour originated by Filmwork
Postscript Output by Image Setting Ltd, 1b Berry Place, Sebastian St, London EC1V OJD (Tel: 071-253 0437)
Printed by BPCC Magazines (Colchester) (Tel: 851665)
Distribution by COMAG, Tavistock Rd, West Drayton, Middx UB7 7QE (Tel: 0895 444055).

16mm and 35mm microfilms, 105mm microfiche and article copies are available through University Microfilms Inc, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106, USA

ENDGAMES: Weekend Competition

No 3295 Set by Eric the Bird
We asked for estate agents' descriptions of any famous building, here or abroad.

Report by Ms de Meaner
I enjoyed the range of properties, especially Nelson's Column from S Jarvis, and I spent quite a few happy minutes wondering where the bedrooms might go. I was also interested in hearing about George Cowley's private life, his choice of famous building being his own home: "The resident (who sat there picking his nose throughout our visit) even keeps a pet cockatiel in his living-room, which cannot be conducive to health." £12 to the winners.

The ample dimensions of this architect-designed property are such that its unusual ground-plan is best appreciated from the air. For the discerning buyer who can make full use of the numerous heli-pads around its perimeter, however, this can be an everyday pleasure. The pentagonal structure thus revealed lends itself to a range of uses: it is possible to envisage the large central area as a communal living-space, with each of the five self-contained "wings" having its own unique character and function—a servants' quarter, a play area for children, a spacious "granny flat", etc. Security, installed and updated over the years by the previous owners, is first-rate, so that the property would particularly suit the private art collector with a desire for privacy. The modest asking price reflects a certain absence of "frills" in the interior decor, but this gives unlimited scope to the buyer with imaginative flair. For those with sufficient means, this unusual property undoubtedly falls into the "must see" category. IMPORTANT WARNING TO POTENTIAL VIEWERS: There are a number of red buttons in the basement area which must ON NO ACCOUNT be touched.

Peter Norman

A pied-à-terre with its head in the clouds!

Detached individual historic (c.1889) residence with breathtaking views in all directions in best Paris location.

Three principal floors served by private lift, all apertures featuring latest safety-window design. Fire-retardant materials used throughout, although purchaser may wish to sacrifice this in part for increased privacy and modern heating. Space for kitchen and bathroom facilities, subject to surveyor's report. Natural running water (seasonal), and delightful summer sun-trap. Window-box gardens possible, facing all directions. Fitted aircraft warning lights subject to negotiation with vendor.

Would benefit from cladding, and in need of additional thermo-insulation, but guaranteed free of woodworm and rising damp.

Airy, secluded, above traffic noise: would suit ornithologist, amateur meteorologist or hang-glider. Ample parking space near to personal entrance.

D A Prince

From Trafalgar Square, proceed south along Whitehall and turn right into Downing Street where the property is easily distinguishable by the *Whitewash and Floggit* board outside.

Occupying a superb central position, this deceptively spacious property briefly comprises of substantial office space together with a well-apportioned flat for domestic use. Available with prospective early possession, this property would especially suit a self-styled western leader, eager to return to work after possible premature retirement. Perfectly situated for tube, bus and urgent summons from Buckingham Palace, this much sought-after residence boasts a number of recent improvements: a street-end gate allowing additional privacy, blast-proof windows, and, in the upstairs flat, a carefully assembled and fully operative model railway.

Optional benefits which are available to the new owner for a modest additional outlay includes the services of a soon-to-be privatised executive and clerical administration and a personal security force. Catering help may also be available.

The disused emergency telephone lines to Moscow and Washington could be swiftly reinstalled and the prints of The Oval can easily be replaced by the previously displayed photographs of the South Atlantic.

Charlene Croft

A stately pleasure dome with vacant possession, formerly the property of a titled person.

GRYPH'S QUIZ

The answers all have something in common

1. Brief encounter
2. Possessed by the obsessive
3. Traffic-management measure
4. Uninterrupted drama
5. Not a bikini
6. Gaming machine
7. Attacked by Redwood
8. Libya or Seychelles
9. Polyphonic performer
10. Settlement with limited facilities

Answers below

Having been unoccupied for a considerable period, the property needs some attention, and thus offers outstanding scope for sympathetic restoration/conversion, the existing structure placing little restriction on the provision of accommodation to the owner's requirements. Many original features are to be found throughout the surrounding area.

The property has an open aspect to North, South, East and West. It has the benefit of easy access to the charmingly unspoilt region of Mongolia, yet with ease of access to shopping and other facilities in Ulan Bator.

Twice five miles of fertile ground are included in the sale, with private angling in the River Alph and a number of sinuous rills. Paddock for up to 50,000 horses. Well-stocked aromatic gardens with mighty fountain (seasonal). Ample cellarage in naturally refrigerated caves.

Noel Petty

No 3298 Set by George Cowley
Sarah Baxter wrote recently: "Labour still wants to take money off people but is at a loss to think up voter-friendly ways of doing so." We would like you to send in your suggestions by 7 October, 250 words max, which can be in, for example, the form of a memo from Walworth Road to Gordon Brown, or just a list.

Quiz answers

All are in the pattern "one-X Y": 1) One-night stand; 2) One-track mind; 3) One-way street; 4) One-act play; 5) One-piece costume; 6) One-armed bandit; 7) One-parent families; 8) One-party state; 9) One-(wo)man band; 10) One-horse town

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CHESS

You all know what is happening in the two world championship matches, so I will address some other issues.

The Raymond Mays Cars British Championship play-off finally happened after the recovery of an apparently ailing, although seemingly sturdy, Darshan Kumaran.

Michael Hennigan emerged on 13 September as the 1993 champion by drawing the fourth game of their mini-match. Under normal circumstances that would constitute major chess news, but in these momentous times it passed with only a blip on the screen.

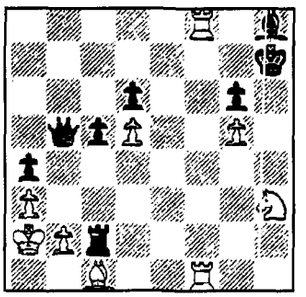
So, a surprise champion appears from an event that boasted two highly rated grandmasters in Hebden and Hodgson. But then nobody has won the British in three successive years since Penrose's heyday back in the sixties.

Raymond Mags Cars British Chess Championship Play-off 1993, London.

White: D Kumaran. Black: M Hennigan

Game 3

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6 5.Be2 0-0 6.Be3 e5 7.d5 a5 8.g4 Na6 9.h4 Nc5 10.f3 h5 11.g5 Nh7 12.Qd2 f6 13.0-0-0 fxg5 14.hxg5 Rf7 15.Kb1 Bd7 16.Nh3 b6 17.Nf2 Qe7 18.Nb5 Rc8 19.Rhg1 Qf8 20.Rdf1 Rf4 21.Nc3 Qf7 22.Nd3 Nxd3 23.Qxd3 Rf8 24.Rf2 Qe7 25.Rfg2 h4 26.Nd1 h3 27.Rg3 Rh4 28.Nf2 Rff4 29.Qd2 Rh5 30.Nd3 Rfh4 31.Rh1 Bh8 32.Rh2 Qg7 33.a3 a4 34.Bd1 Qf7 35.Rg1 Qe7 36.Ka2 Nf8 37.Be2 Qf7 38.Rg3 c5 39.Rg1 Rh7 40.Bf2 R4h5 41.f4 exf4 42.Bxh5 Rxh5 43.Nxf4 Rh7 44.Be3 Qe8 45.Qc2 Re7 46.Rf1 b5 47.cxb5 Rxc4 48.Bc1 Bf5 49.Nxh3 Qxh5 50.Rhf2 Re2 51.Rxf5 Rxc2 52.Rxf8 Kh7



A game that speaks for Michael's fighting qualities.

There have been several new books around the London match. Two by Raymond Keene are Nigel Short's best games and Gary Kasparov's best games (B T Batsford, £9.99)

These are complimentary volumes written for the club player.

By far the most significant new publication, though, has to be the long awaited Batsford Chess Endings, co-authored by Jon Speelman, Jon Tisdall and Bob Wade (450 pages, Paperback, £19.99).

This is also a kind of complimentary volume in that, in the early eighties, Batsford put out *Batsford Chess Endings*. That work attracted some criticism for treating several lines in too skimpy a manner and Batsford was even moved to auction Kasparov's proofs in order to validate that he was indeed an author.

The new volume is another attempted compendium and must therefore deal with certain areas rather briefly. Nevertheless, it contains some very interesting new practical and theoretical examples and an important selection of database analysis of pure endings, for example, Queen versus two Knights or Queen versus Rook and Pawn. I was particularly impressed by some of Speelman's analysis and studies in the Pawns, Bishops and Rooks chapter.

Perhaps the highest commendation comes from Viktor Korchnoi who perused my advance copy and passed judgment: "Very good book."

James Plaskett

NEW STATESMAN & SOCIETY

Subscribe now—just £30 for 6 months

Direct Debit saves you money and inconvenience

Save over 25% on newsstand prices and make sure you get your copy of *NSS* every week by taking out a subscription by **Direct Debit. Pay just £30 for six months** and you can receive your regular copy of Britain's leading radical weekly. After that, we do all the work. Renewal is automatic, unless you want to cancel. Just fill in the form below. (Make sure you complete both parts)

If you would prefer to subscribe by cheque or credit card, you can still save 15% on newstand prices and we'll send you a copy of **J K Galbraith**'s latest book, *The Culture of Contentment.*

Complete only if you wish to pay by Direct Debit

DIRECT Debit

Payment instructions to Bank/Building Society:

I instruct you to pay direct debits at the request of New Statesman & Society. The amounts are variable and may be debited at varying dates but may be changed only after I have been given prior notice. I will inform my bank/building society in writing if I wish to cancel this instruction. I understand that if any direct debit is paid which breaks the terms of this instruction, the bank/building society will make a refund.

Bank/Building Society .....

Address .....

.....

.....

Account Holder .....

Account No. .....

Sort Code .....

Signature ..... Date .....

Office/Bank use only: Originators Identification No 971520. Ref No. NSM

Please send me a subscription to *New Statesman & Society* and my free copy of *The Culture of Contentment.* (annual subscription only).

Name .....

Address .....

.....

.....

I enclose my cheque/postal order for £.....

made payable to New Statesman & Society, or please debit my Access/Visa/Diners Club/American Express card number:

Signature: .....

Annual Subscription Rates: UK £70, Europe (inc Eire) £80, North America $138, Rest of World (Airspeeded) £88, Students £39

Send to: **New Statesman & S ociety Subscriptions, FREEPOST, London E2 8BR** (no stamp needed in the UK).

[ ] Tick here if you do not wish to receive other promotional mailing

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BACKCHAT

Mat Coward asks why, if Tories prefer Labour policies, they don't vote Labour

The big question now, it seems to me, is what on earth will persuade Tory voters not to vote Tory, given that most of them loathe their leader, despise his ministers, and oppose his policies? Or could it be, in fact, that no matter what violence the Tories inflict on their own supporters, the supporters will still support them?

I spent the years between 1987 and 1992 convinced that the next election would be decided by Conservative abstentions. In the event, it was decided—albeit more narrowly than most factions care to admit—by Labour abstentions. But at the beginning of the 1992 campaign it still looked as if I was right: tens of thousands of Tories did seem likely to stay at home, or at least spoil their ballots (by voting Liberal or Green).

True, this was partly due to their being manipulated by opinion polls, which tricked them into believing that defeat was imminent. But that doesn't entirely explain the mystery. Surely, stupid as they undoubtedly are, they must have realised that if they didn't vote Conservative, they wouldn't get a Conservative government? It's just not credible that thousands of people only discovered how to do elementary electoral mathematics during the last week before polling.

Clearly, we need to look at this in three parts. First, why do Conservative voters no longer support the Tory party? This one's easily answered. Principally, they all agree that Major is useless (that's not quite true: I did meet a man the other week who said that, in his opinion, "Major is doing a pretty damn good job, considering." Considering what? "Well, you know, considering that he's useless").

As well as the leadership problem, which will not be easily resolved, since it is really one that was only postponed after Thatcher's defeat, there's the matter of policy. In the 1980s, government actions were designed to hurt other people (which Tory voters didn't mind much), and the nation as a whole (which they didn't give a shit about). Current policies, however, seem deliberately to target Torydom, the way a confident bully might test the breaking-point of a cowed victim.

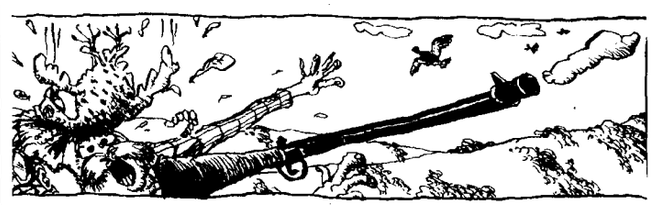
Next, we must ask: if Tories hate the government, why does nobody imagine for a moment that they will ever vote Liberal with serious intent? This puzzle need not detain us, its answer is obvious: nobody with any self-respect has ever voted Liberal, under any circumstances.

Finally, the third conundrum, the big one. Since, on every subject of substance, Tory voters prefer Labour policies to their own, why won't they vote Labour? I'm not sure, but I do know that the correct answer isn't any of those most often suggested.

It is even beginning to dawn, I think, on Labour's Chamberlainites that wholesale adoption of a Tory manifesto won't do the trick. If people wanted privatisation, deregulation and deunionisation, then they would buy it from the firm that invented it, not from a disreputable gang of fly-by-night flyposters, unable to supply references.

So do we have any idea what Conservatives want? Yes—they want to be left alone, and they want to think they are middle class; their desire for the latter prevents them from voting for the former. To sum up, then: there simply is no way in which Conservative voters can be persuaded to vote Labour. We'll just have to wait until they all die of old rage—or else until they all return to the poverty their grandparents knew, when, perhaps, they will finally learn that just because you've got a mortgage doesn't mean you've got away.

FORTEANA



Felix Bennett

When you take a bite, it's amazing what you might find, says **Paul Sieveking**

Some rather odd things have been turning up in food in recent months.

In June, the Russian newspaper *Moskovsii Komsomolets* carried a story that has set Forteans and folklorists arguing over its authenticity. According to the report, a Moscow woman paid £40 for two pounds of steak for a family dinner and put it in the freezer. She pulled it out on 12 June, Russian Independence Day. When the family dog was offered a piece of the strangely coloured meat, he "sniffed it, whimpered pitifully and left". The women then cut into the meat and discovered a metallic object, which her husband identified as a bullet from a Marakov pistol.

Police told them the steak was human flesh and raided the state store in southwest Moscow where it had come from, but the remainder had been bought up. "To those who weren't lucky enough to find the bullet," gloated the newspaper, "we can only wish 'bon appetit'." Neither the store nor any investigating officers were named, but a journalist on the paper insisted the report was authentic.

Meanwhile in the west, human flesh has turned up in smaller quantities. Last January, for instance, Kannan Gangadharn, 15, of Ilford, Essex, heated up a Tyne Brand hot pot. He bit into something hard and foul-tasting, which turned out to be half a human finger. Kannan's mother Omana said he was going to become a vegetarian.

Lynn Wulf, an inspector for the Suffolk County Consumers Affairs Department, unwittingly brought her work home. She found half an inch of human finger in a bandage when she opened a can of Pennsylvania Dutchman mushroom stems on 10 April at her house in Long Island. She planned to sue for a modest $15,000,000, claiming that the shock had reactivated her bulimia, requiring therapy.

In the same month, nurse Rosemary Pothecary bought a salad in Anthony's Take-Away in Tottenham Street, in London's West End. Back home, she was chewing the final forkful of shredded cabbage when she bit on the top of a human thumb, attached to part of a thumbnail. Earlier in the sandwich bar, a Mr Campos had been preparing coleslaw when he cut off half his thumb and was rushed to hospital. No one thought of checking where the missing digit was. In August, owner Anthony Daniels had to pay £800 in fines, costs and damages.

Also in April, a student found the paw of an unidentified animal in a bowl of vegetable soup served in an Ashland, Virginia, cafeteria.

Two packets of frozen peas opened in Hamilton, Ontario, in the same week in January had surprises in them. Janet Selemidis found a frozen caterpillar or insect larva in a packet of Pick-a-Fresh peas, while Mike Hamilton's wife found a frozen frog in a bag of Libby's Canada Grade A peas.

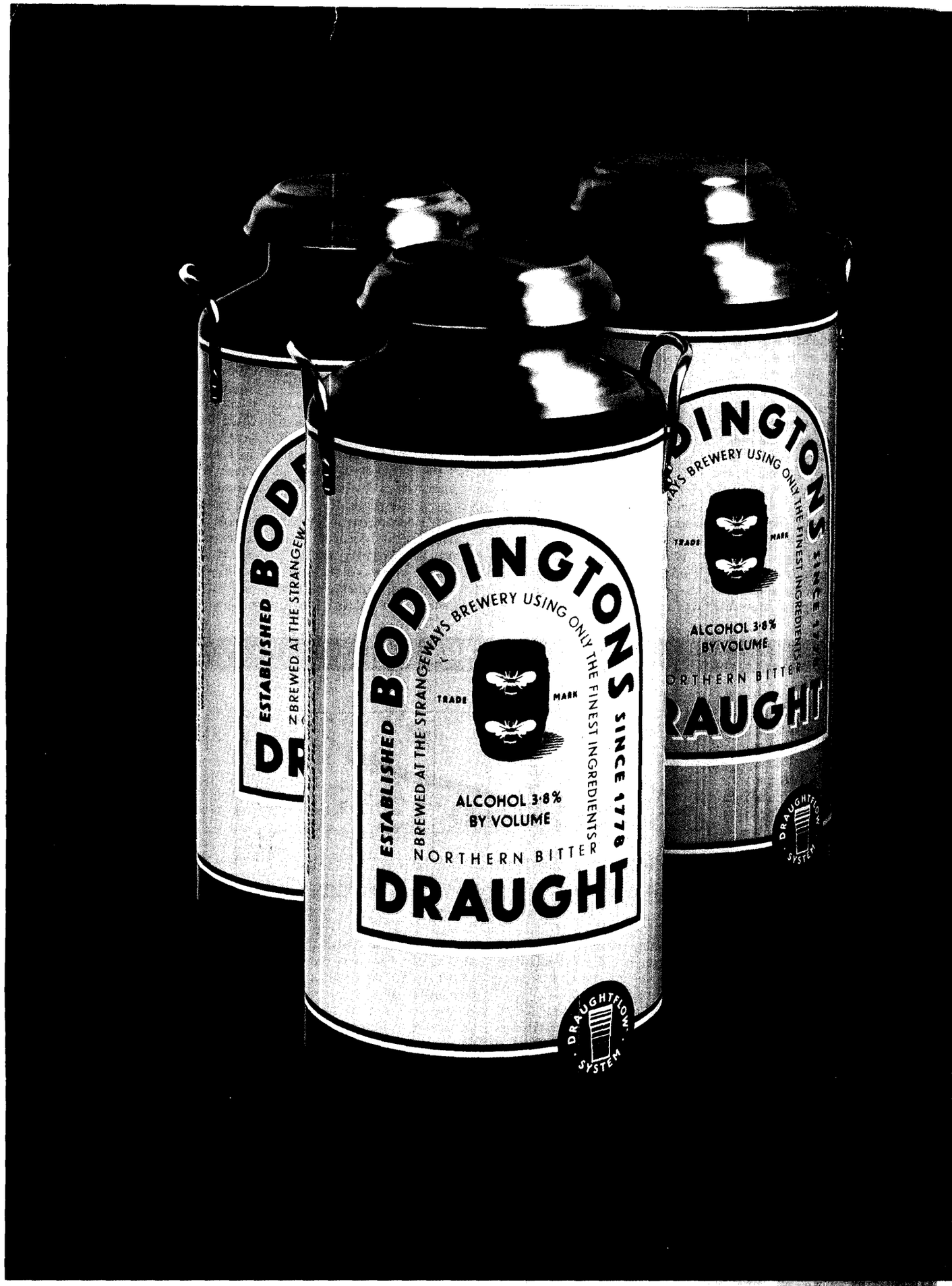
Cindy Moeykens from Manchester, New Hampshire, opened a bag of Reisman's Super Lite Pretzels on 15 June, and her son Justin, 11, found one with a small frog baked on to it. Andrew Roper, quality control manager for Reisman, said the pretzels were made in a factory in Pennsauken, New Jersey, and that, as far as he was aware, "the area doesn't have any frogs. We're in a very dry area."

On 9 June, an 82-year-old man in Tacoma, Washington state, said he had found a syringe in a can of Diet Pepsi. By 17 June, "Pepsi-steria" had led to more than 50 reports of syringes in Pepsi cans in 23 states. None of them checked out, and at least six arrests were made. PepsiCo, which has 400 different automated, high-speed assembly plants, claimed it was virtually impossible to place an object in a can. The panic could be attributed to the increasing number of proven incidents of random product tampering in the US; but its bizarre nature and the speed with which it spread from coast to coast were unprecedented.

The original report in Tacoma was possibly the result of a misinterpretation by the old man. His daughter's mother-in-law was a diabetic and may have disposed of her syringe in an empty Pepsi can —a protective measure recommended by the Diabetes Association.

Paul Sieveking is editor of "Fortean Times"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



BODDINGTONS. THE CREAM OF MANCHESTER.

Courtesy of the ingenious new Draughtflow™ system, you can now enjoy the smooth flavour and creamy head of Boddingtons from a can. Brewed at the Strangeways Brewery since 1778.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED